■ Entertainment / A5
Where in the world is 'Genghis Khan'? Film archivists want to know

■ Across / A16
RP remains free of bird flu, tests in Bulacan duck farm show

■ World / A10 ■ News / A2
Iraq roots from suicide bombing blitz
CBCP formula: Truth Commission, then impeachment

■ Sports / A15
Tiger Woods wins British Open for 10th Grand Slam title

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GMA apologizes, this time to Kris

By Christine O. Avendaño

ONCE AGAIN, President Macapagal-Arroyo apologized on Sunday, this time to Kris Aquino, for the offensive remarks made last week by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez against the popular actress and TV host.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry about what happened,"

Ramos, De Venecia now control Palace, says Drilon

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Former President Fidel Ramos is out. So Immigration hall? So long to Malacañang, according to Senate Presi

2 more GMA execs quit

NEW TEAM. President Macapagal-Arroyo swears in new Finance Secretary Margarita Teves and new Budget Secretary Romulo Neri.

Say President failed to deliver reforms

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Leila B. Salaverria

MALACAÑANG officials have dismissed as part of pay-war tactics and black propaganda by President Macapagal-Arroyo's detractors any news of resignations from the Cabinet in addition to the desertion by the so-called "Hyatt 10" that included her entire economic team.

But yesterday two more Palace officials—Nicky Confesor, presidential consultant on good governance and poverty alleviation, and Corazon Coalion, presidential assistant on overseas relations—made public their permanent break from the administration.

Their confirmation of their irrevocable resignation came 11 days after seven Cabinet secretaries and three agency heads, known as the "Hyatt 10," quit and asked Mr Arroyo to do the same.

Among those who quit were Cesar Purisima as finance secretary and Emilia Boncodin as budget secretary—two officials well-respected by the international community.

The 10 on Ronald Mc Arroyo had increasingly pilloried by the election scandal and had lost her ability to push for reforms. The President has been accused of stealing the May 2004 vote.

On Sunday, the presidential communications director, Ricardo Abalos, stepped down, but he stayed on in his other post as chief peace negotiator with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, a group fighting for an independent Islamic state in Mindanao.

Apparently uncertain of the resignation of Confesor and Coalion, presidential political adviser Gabriel Claudio branded as "black propaganda" reports of further resignations from the Cabinet.

"You can be sure that this is ... a way to lessen the confidence of those against the

GUIDOTE: Concerned about economy

GANCHOTORENA: I want to speak freely.

GMA's Sona may mention Garci tape

By Leila B. Salaverria and TJ Burgonio

EVEN though the public may have heard enough of it, President Macapagal-Arroyo's explanation about her disconcerting phone call to an election official last year may appear in her State of the Nation Address.

"The explanation has been made several times ... but maybe for emphasis it may be repeated in the Sona," said Gabriel Claudio, chief of the Presidential Legal Affairs Liaison Office.

Some opposition leaders—notably Senators Panfilo Lacson and Sergio Osmeña III—said they would boycott the July 25 joint session of Congress. Some lawmakers were supposedly even planning a walkout. (See related story on Page A6.)

The presidential address will also be a session among Ms Arroyo and her erstwhile close allies in the Senate which neither side probably will relish.

When she delivers her speech, the President should expect to see three rebels from her ruling coalition—Senate President Franklin Drilon, Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and Sen. Rodolfo Biazon.

The three Liberal Party senators had been among Ms Arroyo's most trusted allies in the upper chamber until they broke away from her and called for her resignation on July 8.

The rebellious trio yesterday

Turf war ruined Palace PR strategy, says Afable

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

GOING BEFORE he quit his post, resigned Communications Secretary Ignacio Bunye had been expressing over a year now within his team, which active fragmented, aimless public relations strategy and the moment this ceased to exist.

"There are turf issues, but they are not big problems. We need turf play just enough to keep the adrenaline up but not as much as to create fragmentation, duplication or unsure," Afable said in an email to the bureau.

Afable said the e-mail in May shortly after leaders of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines went to Malacañang and offered their services for free to help President Macapagal-Arroyo improve her image.

"I can't go into the specific turf issues because I am dealing with peers so I only said it would be unfair to them. Every organization has its challenges," he said.

Aside from Afable, the Office of the Communications Director (OCD) has three other members with Cabinet rank—Press Secretary and Ms Arroyo's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye, Secretary Gorgy Simeon for government broadcast matters, and Secretary

Impeach issues: Cheating, lying, stealing

By Philip C. Tubeza, TJ Burgonio, Michael Lim Ubac and Juliet Labog-Javellana

OPPOSITION lawmakers yesterday announced they had the numbers to push through impeachment proceedings against President Macapagal-Arroyo for allegedly "cheating, lying and stealing."

Rep. Rodolfo Fontecha said the opposition planned to file its motion Thursday—four days before Congress reconvenes on July 25.

The President, battling for political survival in the face of the worst political crisis of her four-year-old presidency, will make a State of the Nation Address before Congress next Monday.

Her opponents promised to mobilize their biggest protest rallies outside the session hall to force the Chief Executive to step down in the wake of charges her family, associates, illegal lottery payoffs and disclosures of a bugged telephone conversation allegedly showing she rigged the May 2004 election.

Ms Arroyo has apologized for talking to an election official during the bidbirig but denies ever committing a crime. She says she will never give up her office and challenged her opponents to impeach her instead.

Opposition lawmakers, who initially described impeachment as a long shot, said they had 75 to 80 supporters of their case, a core by a third of the 236-member House, or 79, would lead to the automatic transmittal of the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate.

Worst over for RP debt, says poll; peso, stocks up

NO SURRENDER. Former Sen. Loren Legarda presents what she says is proof of falsified results to back her claim that she was cheated in the 2004 vice presidential election. (Story on Page A2.)

All POLITICAL tensions eased, a show of panache seen yesterday emerged on the economic front.

The peso climbed to a three-week high against the dollar while local stocks rose for the third straight trading day.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) also reported a balance of payments (BOP) surplus of $343 million in May, reversing a deficit of $437 million in the same month last year.

In a Reuters survey, four out of 10 regional traders polled Philippine bonds as their top choice among Asian issues.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index rose 32.17 points, or 0.6 percent, to 5,000.35, its highest finish as the first trading day for broker Sharon Bautista finished 4.13 points up Monday to 4,962.22 after advancing 58.90 points Friday.

Citizens' Intel disclosure: 39 to 27, while 41 results were unchanged.

Stock traders said there were indications the Supreme Court might soon lift the suspension on the expected nine-added tax (VAT) law, the centerpiece of the government's fiscal reform program. Second-quarter corporate earnings were also expected to be robust.

Still, investors remained cautious. "The push abroad remains: Bunye due to political uncertainties," said ING Investment senior manager Roberto Cano.

The opposition, which has accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of cheating her way to victory in the 2004 election and her family of corruption, is readying an impeachment complaint against her. Other groups are planning a big protest rally to coincide with the Ar-

Ex-finance chief apologizes to SC for VAT remark

By Artemio M. Pascual

FACING judiciary contempt charges that could put him behind bars, resigned Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima on Monday apologized to the Supreme Court for his statements that were taken to mean by the media that President Macapagal-Arroyo had pressured the high tribunal into issuing a favorable order on the 10-percent expanded value-added tax (VAT) law.

The statements issued by his counsel claim that the President had at one time asked her finance team if it would be possible to stop the implementation of the VAT law, which took effect July 1.

"If my statements have been misconstrued by the press and broadcast media, I apologize with re-

A3
WEATHER FORECAST
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TUESDAY, JULY 19, 2005
Second FRONTPAGE

3 'progressive' bishops heed Pope's call to steer clear of politics

By Christian V Esguerra

PETS Pope Benedict XVI's subtle rebuke still fresh, three "progressive" Catholic bishops have promised to heed the Supreme Pontiff and keep out of the raging political crisis hounding the Arroyo administration.

For starters, Bishops Deogracias Iñiguez, Antonio Tobias and Julio Xavier Labayen have agreed to distance themselves from the Ecumenical Bishops Forum (EBF), a group of mostly ecumenists demanding President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation.

The decision came after the Vatican, through Apostolic Nuncio Antonio Franco, repeatedly reminded the local clergy to stay out of politics and focus on their episcopal ministry.

"What Franco wants is for the clergy not to get involved in direct political action," Tobias told the Inquirer Sunday night. "When a bishop, a priest, or religious stands openly on political issues, we are reminded that it's not our role. It's specific to the laity."

Franco had phoned Tobias on July 4, reminding him that as bishop, he should simply provide guidance to his flock and not lead a political action. The prelate from Bontoc/Lacs was then in the middle of a CBCP assembly at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

Franco again relayed the message to a speech before 85 bishops during their regular plenary assembly in Manila more than a week ago.

"I was no longer openly demand a resignation," Tobias said, pointing out that the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines had already issued its official position on the matter.

The CBCP did not join the clamor for the President's ouster but mentioned her against ignoring such a call.

Iñiguez, the self-spoken Caloocan bishop mistakenly reported in a Radio Veritas radio on Sunday said that he and the two prelates would soon step "behind the scenes" even if they were not cutting their ties with the EBF.

Press conferences by the group were well attended ostensibly because of the bishops' participation. It was Labayen, prelate emeritus of Infanta, who read the EBF's statements, including the last one that called on the President to step down.

Loren presents 'proofs' of fraud

By Cynthia D. Balana

FORMER Sen. Loren Legarda yesterday presented more documentary showing alleged evidence of massive fraud not just against Vice President Noli de Castro but also against President Macapagal-Arroyo in connection with the 2004 elections.

Legarda showed copies of "personally falsified election returns" from three separate localities covering the presidential and vice presidential contest.

Legarda, who was the vice presidential candidate of opposition Koalisyon Ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino in the last election, said an election return from a polling precinct in Leyte showed that the President got 267 votes while De Castro received 268 votes.

On the other hand, Sen. said Legarda received an identical number of two votes each, but the total number of votes listed in the ER was "271."

"Whoever falsified the electoral return did not know how to count," Legarda said.

She presented "clearly falsified election returns" from Naples City, Pampanga, and another from Mandaue City in Cebu which showed "that the handwriting on the ERs were done by one person as they were similar in form and execution and symmetrical in formation."

Another election return from Bohol, she said, contained a total of the votes cast for each candidate, but did not include the tally of votes from which the totals were derived. The columns which were supposed to contain the particular votes were blank.

In earlier presentations, Legarda had shown slash the discrepancies between the votes tallied in the ERs and in the certificates of canvass which were used by the Congress in tallying the total number of votes received by the presidential and vice presidential candidates.

At the same time, Legarda denounced some attempts by De Castro's camp to delay the proceedings of the Presidential Electoral Tribunal in deciding her electoral protest against the vice president.

"That means that they themselves are not convinced that Noli won in the election," she said. "So why are they delaying the process? They have even filed another motion to dismiss. They are clearly afraid that the truth would come out and people would know that De Castro is a fake vice president."

'Truth Commission, then impeachment'

CBCP spells out formula to solve political crisis

By Christine V. Esguerra

FIRST, Truth Commission, then impeachment.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) yesterday spelled out in more concrete terms how the country should deal with the present political crisis.

Msgr. Hermenegildo Cenzon, CBCP secretary general, said the bishops were open to the establishment of a Truth Commission to determine if President Macapagal-Arroyo had indeed cheated in the 2004 elections, as suggested by her wiretapped conversations with a high election official.

And once findings are available, the President should be subjected to an impeachment process to settle the legitimacy of her administration, he said.

"That is the Constitution and I say the Constitution is our guide," he said. "So why are they delaying the process? They have even filed another motion to dismiss. They are clearly afraid that the truth would come out and people would know that De Castro is a fake vice president."

Cenzon said the CBCP had consulted moral theologians before exploring the twin options of establishing the commission and jumpstarting an impeachment process.

The CBCP had actually hinted at these options in its official statement released more than a week ago.

It called for an "independent process to examine the authenticity of the so-called Garci-Hello-Garci, verify any possible betrayal of public trust, and there see if due consideration on all those found guilty."

"Beyond apology is accountability to the end, with forgiveness in justice," it said, referring to Ms Arroyo's public apology before the nation in which she admitted to the former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Cenzon, however, expressed reservations against the Truth Commission as the least means to settle the crisis. As to composition, he said, it is limited to merely advisory or recommendatory, he said.

He also said that impeachment might not end here because of the very strong possibility that politicians involved in the process would decide along party lines.

Asked if bishops were willing to sit in a Truth Commission, Cenzon said the CBCP would "think about it." He said there had been cases in the past when they were invited to constitute fact-finding bodies. In recent years, he said bishops were given as representatives.

The Bishops Businessmen's Conference (BBC) had earlier proposed a Truth Commission to be composed of "eminent persons held in high public esteem." BBC executive director Jesse Andres said that it be headed by Christian Monsod, former Commission on Elections chair.

Cenzon said the CBCP had no specific persons in mind on the composition of the proposed commission.

Cenzon's claim that the bishops thought or insisted for their supposedly impartiality official statement, were not clear during their flock amid the crisis, he said.

"There should be no intrusion from politics by the hierarchy," he said. "But it does not mean that the bishops will abdicate their role and do nothing with regard to the political situation. That would be a sin of omission. We will not wash our hands of the responsibility given us."

NEDA issues guidelines for unified nation ID card

By Michelle V. Ramos

IN MAKING a high court ruling that the executive department's move is unconstitutional and objections that the scheme could invade into citizens' privacy, the Arroyo administration is still set to implement the first phase of the national identification system.

The National Economic and Development Authority yesterday announced that it had issued the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of Executive Order No. 420, which calls for the establishment of a unified ID card for Filipinos.

The system envisages the issuance of a smart, general-use ID to individuals which can be used to transact business with various government agencies and government-owned and controlled corporations.

Individuals who register under the plan will be assigned an common reference number (CRN) which will go into a computerized data base under the administration of the government.

This means that a person will have a single ID that will serve, say, both as a drivers' license which the Land Transportation Office separately issues and as a proof of his membership in the Social Security System.

The Arroyo administration defends the ID scheme as a key measure to promote national security, but critics, especially those from militant groups, said it would be wielded as a tool to suppress political dissent and silently persecute foes of the government.

"This measure will be used to monitor citizens and groups opposing the Macapagal-Arroyo administration's anti-people policies," Joel Maglalang, secretary general of the Kilusang Mayo Uno, said. "Warrant violations of civil, political and human rights will take place if the ID system will be approved."

Some lawmakers are also questioning the goodness of the executive arm implementing a national ID system, since the Supreme Court last October struck a similar move claiming the Estrada administration was unconstitutional, saying that the measure should have emanated from Congress.

According to National Statistics Office (NSO) Administrator Carmelita Ericta, the unified multipurpose ID is to be issued on basis, biometrics, and other personal data.

Basic data include the name, date and place of birth, name of parents and sex of the ID holder, thumbmark data over the photo, signature, and the person of the holder's index fingers and irises. Other data will comprise of home address, marital status, height, weight, prominent distinguishing features and the tax identification number, or TIN.

The NEDA's implementing rules say the registration and data collection process will require individuals to go to a registration agency to fill up a registration form which will contain their biometric data. They will be asked to consent to have the government's existing information on them used for purposes of the national identification system.

The Arroyo's ID system will designate government agencies in either register or issue the cards.

Those that will be tasked will registration will be the ones to collect the personal information data of individuals. Card issuing agencies will be the ones to produce and issue cards to their employees and members.

For its part, the NSO will be tasked to perform the function of a central verification and enrollment agency which will verify the data and accredit and maintain the data under a common reference number database. The NSO, which is attached to the NEDA, is the country's major statistical agency responsible for collecting, compiling, classifying, producing, publishing and disseminating general purpose statistics.

The NSO will serve as the Biometrics Data Matching System (BDMS) center for verifying the biometric data submitted to government agencies.

Director Lionel Rebollos, head of NEDA's information technology coordination staff, said the national ID system would be implemented in three phases, the first of which would start upon the effectivity of the implementing rules and regulations which will take effect 15 days after publication in a newspaper.

During the first 60 days, participating agencies will plan for the adoption of the CRN into their systems, such as the inclusion in their existing forms and systems. Card-issuing agencies will start to redesign their existing agency IDs and the CRN capacity will begin to be filled," said Rebollos.

He said the second phase would take place a year after the effectivity of the IRR, when agencies start to issue the standalone cards, to be followed by the last phase, which is the full implementation of the multipurpose ID.

Consa won't fly in Senate, says Drilon

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE MOVE to fast-track a plan to amend the Constitution by convening the Senate and the House into a constituent assembly could evoke the voice in the press there will not prosper in the upper chamber, said Senate President Franklin Drilon.

"Efforts to revive the pretext political crisis through an amendment to the constitution for forcing a parliamentary system and effectively cutting short the term of the President will not fly in the Senate simply because there are not enough votes," Drilon said in a press conference.

Drilon said that under Article XVII, Section 1 of the Constitution, a three-fourths vote of all members of the Senate, or 18 members, is needed to propose constitutional amendments to the Constitution through a constituent assembly.

"There are only 23 senators in the Senate and therefore a negative vote of six will kill any proposal to amend the Constitution through a constituent assembly," Drilon said.

"On the basis of public statements of my colleagues and of my own consultations with them, I cannot see 18 senators voting for it," he added.

Drilon said proponents of Charter change in order frustrate Malacañang Palace's views are just wasting their time.

Ramos, De Venecia . . . 2 more GMA execs quit

From page A1

drew Franklin Drilon.

Drilon told a news briefing later there was reason to believe that Ramos, along with Speaker Jose de Venecia, was in control of Malacañang now.

Recent appointments of Cabinet secretaries closely identified with Ramos and De Venecia support this view, said Drilon.

The new secretaries were named to President Macapagal-Arroyo's official family following the resignations of 10 top Malacañang officials just over a week ago in gross disapproval of her resignation over election fraud charges.

The Senate President said that he got Secretary Ronaldo Puno, who was appointed last week by the President to replace Eduardo Ermita, as a known protégé of Ramos.

Puno was director general of the Congressional Planning and Budget Office before he became socioeconomic planning secretary.

Another Cabinet appointee, Trade Secretary Peter Wu Yu, who replaced Cesar Purisima, was a member of the Board of Speakers Realty or a former chair of the Philippine Stock Exchange and headed the state-run Philippine National Bank during the Ramos administration.

Drilon described cautious former officers in charge Alexander Aguirre as a former aide of Ramos. And the fresh face of Ramos, Avelino Cruz, was the personal lawyer of Alberto Lina.

Political compromises

Drilon said "political compromises" made by Ms Arroyo with her advisers and allies were among the major factors why he decided to break ties with the President.

Ramos, chair emeritus of the ruling party Lakas, earlier discussed suggestions that he was a kingmaker and that he could become the country's prime minister if there was a shift to a parliamentary form of government.

This came after Ramos declined his support to Ms Arroyo during the most critical 24 hours of her four-year-old administration, on July 4, ostensibly saving her in the midst of the defection by her key secretaries and a call by former President Corazon Aquino to flee the presidency.

Ramos has brushed aside rumors that he has become the de facto leader of the country and is making a comeback through his proposal for change in the form of government.

But Drilon and Ms Arroyo were increasingly becoming beholden to Ramos who continue to support her administration.

All decisions are made by the President on the strained relations could they still bring the survival of her administration," he said.

"Her will find difficulty in her governance because a lot of components are being made to decide to survive and the economy will suffer because of these components," said Drilon.

Asked to comment on reports that he broke away from the President because he himself was interested in getting a post in government, Drilon, who is also a senior leader of Lakas, replied: "I don't have any interest to be the Vice President. It is a naive line."

He said he was also not interested in any Cabinet position because he had already held "high position" as a member of the Cabinet in various administrations.

Confident

Drilon said he was confident of keeping his post as Senate President because he has the support of majority of his colleagues.

But he said he was always ready to hand over his position because it was "a gift from [Senate] God"—referring to the number of senators required to maintain his post.

He said he would honor the agreement he made with Sen. Manuel Villar to rotate sharing as Senate President. Under the agreement, Drilon will serve from July 2004 to July 2006, and Villar will take over from July 2006 to July 2007.

As Senate President, Drilon said he would call Senate President and listen to her views but limits of the Malou address Senate's opening this year's session of Congress on July 25.

However, Drilon said that unless the crisis of leadership was resolved by December the economy would become unmanageable. He said the continuing political turmoil would compound the economic and social problems. With a report from Inday Espina-Varona

From page A1

government," he told reporters in the Eagleson at Manila in 1986.

Rigoberto Tiglao, chief of the Presidential Management Staff, said Friday it was "classic pep-up technique to say that you have people you cannot trust in your Cabinet."

Tiglao was reacting to the statement of former adviser to the press process Teresita Deles, one of the Party 18, that most Cabinet members would resign.

Deeply concerned

Gus Lagman, a director of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, is a former executive of the Ayala Group, a core member of the Makati Business Club which has asked the President to resign.

Gutierrez, who was only appointed by the post in February, is to help Santos regional or economic issues, was at the recent forum attended by the Hyatt 10.

Both gave similar reasons for abandoning the group.

In an interview with reporters, Gutierrez said she resigned because she was deeply concerned about the contents of the "Hello Garci" tapes in which the President allegedly plotted with Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to rig last year's elections results.

"I wanted to speak freely and I felt I could not do that while I am still a consultant to the [Cabinet] or the President's and also holding an appointed position at the DOST," she said.

Gutierrez says is supporting the formation of a truth commission to study the wiretapped conversation between the President and Garcillano and the subsequent process against the President.

But she said she would not pass any ethical problem.

Reforms slow in coming

Gutierrez said Mrs Arroyo has been visibly resigned on July 7, the same day that the President ordered all Cabinet members to hand in their resignations to pave her a free hand in revamping her Cabinet.

She said she waited for the President to implement the reforms she promised in the height of the "Hello Garci" scandal but the did not deliver. "The reforms were slow in coming and the only honorable thing to do is to resign as soon as I can," she said.

In a text message, Gutierrez said: "I'm genuinely concerned about the economy and its loss of confidence the political mess going both very pressing domestic and external challenges we are facing.

"The economy was no longer getting the full attention it deserves, hence the reforms for which citizen groups appeared to be in jeopardy as the more seems to be escalating from all sides of the political fence all at the expense of the economy," she said.

She reiterated her resignation on July 8 but was supposed to be effective July 15.

In a TV interview Gutierrez said she "has a high regard" for the former members of the economic team. "They have very good economic strategies, they were very determined to carry out the reform program."

Use of resources

She said resources of the Office of the President were being allocated to the survival defending the position of Ms Arroyo rather than running the economy.

Gutierrez said several options were available to before she decided to resign. "One is for the President to either stay or resign or for her to be impeached. Like I said, it's going to be a collective decision."

Ms Arroyo has refused to resign and has welcomed opposition plans to impeach her, saying this will give her a chance to clear herself.

Ms Arroyo has publicly apologized for what she called a "lapse in judgment" in calling an elected official but has denied any wrongdoing.

The scandal has triggered massive street protests and a censure from the influential Roman Catholic Church, which stopped short of calling for her resignation.

Malacañang keeper President Gemma Aquino has also rallied on his actions to resign, as have members of the business community who have backed her economic reforms agenda.

But the President's supporters, however, staged a show of force with a large rally in the capital on Saturday.

Undistracted

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye insisted Monday that Ms Arroyo as presidential consultant on no-vember inhibitor.

"He wants her out," Bunye said, denying that her resignation was politically motivated.

He said the President was not letting the defections of her Cabinet bother her. "The President is undistracted in her work and has the full backing of the Cabinet in the implementation of her programs."

He downplayed the latest resignations as more of those he had talked with told him they would stick it out with the President.

"At this point, all Cabinet members are doomed to have exhausted their resignations and they may be asked to leave, may put or be redeployed where they are more effective. What is important is that the President is doing everything and revitalized and we are working toward restoring political and economic stability," Bunye said.

The President yesterday meant into office her new Justice Cabinet officers.—Finance Secretary Margarito Teves and Budget Secretary Romulo Neri.—In Malacañang to quickly fill up the vacant positions in her core economic team.

Bunye cautioned the public against speculating on the resignations of Abalos as commission chairman.

"We should not speculate on the reasons for his resignation as he himself has not commented on it," he said. Secretary Abalos needs to focus on his job as peace negotiator at this point when we are at the threshold of a final agreement with the MILF," he said. (See story on front page.)

Bunye refused to comment on whether he had submitted an irrevocable resignation.

The remaining members of the Cabinet are in high spirits amid the roiling political crisis, Chamlis said.

"There is a new surge of work, drive, bonding and camaraderie among the Cabinet members who have remained, including the new appointees of the President, who have come in just like Gaimat," he said. With a report from AFP

Turf war ruined Palace PR strategy—Afable

From page A1

Senator Velasco of the Philippine Information Agency.

Afable resigned as communications director on July 6. He has not publicly explained his reasons, but a Cabinet member said he quit because he was at odds by an "unskilled" presentation by former presidential adviser Mario Montaño of a plan to rehabilitate Mrs Arroyo's tattered image.

Afable has said he is staying on as chief peace negotiator with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Balanced counsel

"Having four secretaries having a say in communications may be a way for the Chief Executive to obtain balanced and diverse counsel," he said. "Multiple sources."

"My successor, we disagree and, sometimes, we ignore each other. We all report to the President and it is unrealistic to expect her to process recommendations."

Although he anticipated having problems working with other colleagues, Afable said: "I agreed to the setup because it was very clear from the start that I had no command and control just coordinative functions. I am not responsible for other Cabinet members. I deal with them professionally and on equal footing."

Good times, bad times

A Malacañang source said the setup between Bunye and to the Afable because he got the blame during bad times and merely shared the credit during good times.

One of the sore points among the four heads in the OCD was how Malacañang should respond to criticisms, particularly many attacks, against Ms Arroyo.

Whether wanted to counter her with-out denigrating the personalities behind them. But he didn't want to engage in black propaganda, including falsified or fabricated intelligence reports, or use "blind items" to hit back at the President's detractors," the source said.

"There are actually a few people close to the administration who believe he should do that. But soon you get off the deepend in legitimate PR work, you bring the Office of the President down with you and lose the moral ascendancy to communicate over her most basic programs before the people, "the source added.

The OCD was formed by the President through Executive Order No. 240 in April 2004 to streamline government bureaucracy and coordinate her PR strategy and avoid repeating blunders committed in her first four years in office.

It was a new position that placed Afable in charge of PR matters. Malacañang insiders say the in-house media czar vs government-owned newspaper and radio and television stations to the President's specifics.

From the start, some observers questioned the practicality of centralizing the PR operations, considering it involved various media outlets.

Afable said, "Many parents the OCD is for efficient and I won't be defensive about it. We are not into politics and our only client is the President. What she says, goes."

Intrigues abound

Aside the creation of a de facto media czar, the Malacañang source also said other units felt "threatened by the OCD's creation."

"They prefer to treat these resources outside the Communications Group so they do not deal with [Communications Undersecretary Jacinto] Paras and professional manner," said the source.

The source said intrigues and cases of insubordination mounted especially after Afable announced plans to his bid to abandon the PR division.

"He's a victim of politics because he's part in handling Garci' even considering his sense and approachable personality. He always thinks of overall strategy instead of the small details and probably ignore politicking in the group," the source said.

GMA's wishes

Aside from the turf war, Afable had to contend with Ms Arroyo's predisposition to micromanage the government.

The source said the President sees deeply involved in mapping out the events she wanted to attend, when and where she would like to speak, and the kind of messages she deemed appropriate to the occasion. The has left the OCD with virtually nothing to do but execute full coverage for these events.

Afable also had to make do with a depleted staff and meager budget since Congress had not yet appropriated a budget for the newly created office.

"Afable only had three undersecretaries with no assistant secretaries or enough technical people reporting to her directly. There are several agencies under his supervision, but they have their own chains of command and work procedures in place. It was his edge ago. That is why streamlining is important," the source said.

With his many tasks already spoiling the limits, it was no wonder to people close to Afable why he quit the OCD when frustrated, a show limited by the President told him that worse and told the Cabinet what she thought was the best way to make over the country's beleaguered CEO.

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Correction

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, the front-page banner story—"9th Cabinet exit: Original"—and an accompanying photo caption misstated that resigned Cabinet official Rigoberto Tiglao is God chosen to stay on as the government's chief negotiator with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). Afable will continue to head the government panel in peace negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ronnie G. Pelayo

Where in the world is 'Genghis Khan'?

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE BEST points of Filipino film-makers are elevated.

In the absence of any efficient film-friendly film archive, our cinematic treasures have found permanent homes in France, Great Britain and the United States.

"Negatives of 1970s films by Lino Brocka and Mike de Leon are in their countries," Cinderella "Eve" del Mundo A. and Oday D. Sebastian, officers of the Society of Film Archivists (Sofa), told Inquirer Entertainment.

Television auteur Brocka's "Tatarantado Ka Nguni' Walang," "Maynila... Sa mga Kuko ng Liwanag," "Bayan ko: Kapit sa Patalim" and "Desaparecidos" are in the British Film Institute (BFI), the old de Bosmer's "Gandhi, Kung Hindi Dahil Kay Kapitan?" and Mike de Leon's "Itim."

Brocka's "Jaguar" is in Cinémathèque Française (CF).

Cordy endeavor

Sebastian, who is the secretary of Sofa and a film archivist at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), and CCP's future part of Brocka's "Tinik Dalawa, Ito" (1994) for the challenges of film archives based in the United States.

The CCP Brocka titles added, obtained in new 35mm copies of "Tatarantado," and "Jaguar" with the help of the BFI and CF, and also acquired copies of "Gandhi," and "Itim" from BFI.

These copies, one quite a ruin, looks prevailed Del Mundo revealed.

"When the CCP has ordered a copy of 'Tatarantado,' " she had to handle a lengthy process," Sebastian recounted. "We need a clearance from the local producers and from the person that donated the film to the archives... among others."

Of course, this means were designed precisely to safeguard cinematic treasures. On the bright side, the lowest of contemporary climates can at least be satisfactory.

Classic hand

According to 1950s and 60s' masterpieces can be more confounding.

Case in point is Manuel Conde's "Genghis Khan," which was screened at the Asian Film Festival in 1952 and received rave comments throughout Europe and the U.S.

Two copies, dubbed in French, are in the CF, according to Del Mundo.

But there's a copy in the original Tagalog," he noted "even surprising Filipino based in California bought it from an American distributor and is selling it for $30,000 to any interested party in the Philippines."

So far, no takers in expectation on options.

"Well, these foreign archivists may suddenly decide to donate our films," Del Mundo said.

An example is 1927's "Zamboanga," starring Fernando Poe Jr. and Rosa del Rosario, which was reportedly from Fidayi after Moonlight's 16th Encounter, discovered in which

PAGE 12

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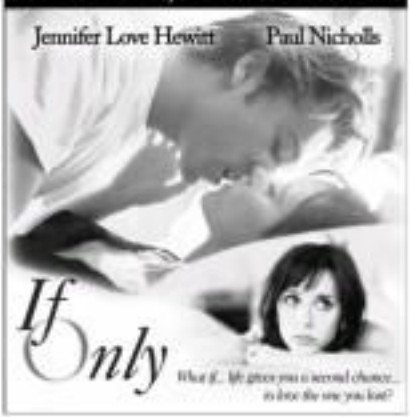

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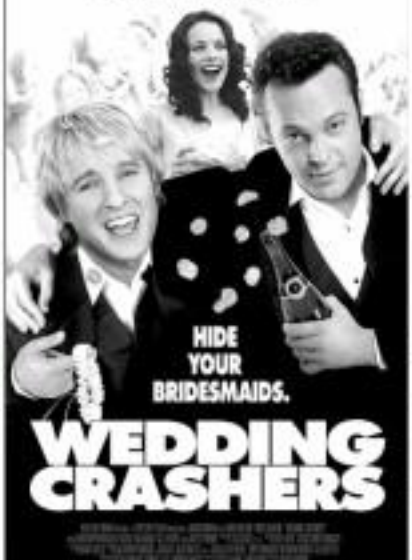

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PAWEL Cavale and Ivday Jalandoni in "Genghis Khan"

Where . . .

From page 6

shows in his research at the US Library of Congress.

"Sabu, Sabaro, Isa" was also screened in Lino's brother Danny Simeka, who later turned it over to the CCP.

On one condition

"Bel Ami" will return the film only if we loan us another that will take care of it here," Del Mundo stressed.

This is why the original "Caesar" (with Rosa del Rosario) and "Cleopatra" (with Edna Luna), both "fumigated" in Thailand, have yet to come home.

"That was the condition given by Thailand," said Teddy Co, ethic curator and member of the Commission on Cinema of the National Commission on Culture and the Arts. "The first questions they asked were: Can you take care of it? Do you have the facilities?"

The "Titan" copies of "Sisma" and "Cleopatra" are incomplete, however.

"Both are 16mm prints, without sound," Del Mundo said. "Perhaps, the movies were cut to be shifted in Thai."

Another rare find in Thailand was Gerry de Leon's "Tampo ni Gundam."

Sa liot, Nonie Severino (who did a report on Cinema) and Tarantino (who's a Filipino's number's already a," Co said. "Gino d'Acampo (who's already a," Co said. "Gino d'Acampo (who's already a," Co said. "Gino d'Acampo (who

Impeach issues: Cheating, lying, stealing

First paragraph A1

House Minority leader Francis Escudero said the complaint would revolve around impeachable offenses of "cheating, lying and stealing" that the President allegedly committed while in office.

He said the opposition legal team, composed of prominent lawmakers and lawyers, were still trying to decide what cases and evidences to include in the complaint.

General offenses

"But the complaint will revolve around those general offenses—cheating in the elections, lying to the public (about the 'Gloria-gate' tapes), and stealing not only the votes but also from government coffers. These will be the basic issues that will be raised against the President in this impeachment complaint," he added.

Escudero said the opposition might include in their case the earlier complaint filed by lawyer Oliver Lozano, a lecturer of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, or file an altogether separate complaint only after the House approves its impeachment rules.

"It's important that the rules are approved first so that we will know what steps to take. The final decision will be made after the rules are approved," he said.

Escudero urged administration lawmakers to support the immediate transmittal of the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate.

"It is in the interest of the opposition, and especially the administration, that this is brought to the Senate so that the President can answer the allegations against her," he said.

According to the Constitution and the current rules, the President can formally answer the charges only after they are brought to the Senate, he added.

Prosecutor

Escudero said Rep. Edcel Lagman would be the lead impeachment prosecutor, while he would act as the impeachment "manager" to handle the "whole impeachment thing."

The opposition is talking with members of the so-called "Ryan 41," referring to the seven Cabinet secretaries and three Malacañang aides whose mass resignations aimed at forcing the President to stand down put the Arroyo administration on the brink over a frantic 24-hour period on July 6.

The 10 officials could provide material on alleged shenanigans in the administration that the opposition could use against Ms. Arroyo, Escudero said.

"This [impeachment process] could be the right place and time for them to speak and divulge what they know," he added.

"I don't think any of them are afraid. They have put their lives, careers, and personal safety on the line. I don't think the allies of the administration can still scare them off with threats to deter them from saying what they know," Escudero said.

Fun the day

On paper, Ms. Arroyo has the numbers in both houses of Congress to fend off a conviction. But that does not guarantee success in a political system driven by strong personalities and vested interests rather than party loyalty.

As the impeachment of deposed President Joseph Estrada showed in 2000, politicians had few qualms about jumping ship if they were in danger of being on the losing side.

"[It was easy to see the day she couldn't dared her detractors to try the impeachment process," risk consultancy Pacific Strategies & Assessments said in a report.

"The real battle for Ghosts's future could very well rest on backroom deals, cajoling the rivals, using promises of wealth and political paybacks."

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. urged House members to start the impeachment proceedings against Ms. Arroyo next week because this was the "win-win solution" to the political turmoil.

"I believe they will have the necessary numbers to do it," he said.

Magsaysay also appealed to the opposition not to hold rallies that disrupted economic activities, referring to the massive protest gathering in Ayala last week.

"They can hold rallies. But I would suggest that they do it where the people will not be affected because the commuters and the motorists are only trying to make a living," he said.

Fairness urged

Also attending Senate President Franklin Drilon said he and two Liberal Party senators—Rodolfo Biazon and Majority Floor Leader Francis Pangilinan—would remain objective if the impeachment complaint reached the Senate. The three senators have broken ties with the President.

"We will be voting in accordance with the evidence that will be presented before the impeachment court," Drilon said at a press briefing.

"I have confidence in the independence and the fairness of the senators ... There will be no voting along party lines insofar as members sitting as judges are concerned."

SUPREME. Lead impeachment prosecutor

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Contaminated fish downs 134 in Maguindanao

Edwin D. Fernandez
With Mindanao Bureau

COTABATO CITY – At least 134 people, including children, were hospitalized over the weekend after eating what authorities believe to be contaminated anchovies in three remote villages of Upi, Maguindanao.

Complaining of severe stomach ache, headache and vomiting, the villagers were brought to trucks and jeeps in Upi district hospital starting Saturday, Upi Mayor Rasmin Piang said.

About 20 of the victims, most of them children, were in critical condition and Datu Piang, a doctor at the Upi district hospital, said no deaths had been reported.

The victims purchased kilometer anchovies from four vendors on the riverbank but on Sunday many of those who ate the fish began suffering from severe headaches, stomach pains and vomiting, Piang said.

The four vendors, who were among the fatalities, were being investigated.

"This could have eaten fish contaminated with a poisonous substance. We are taking samples of the fish for laboratory examination to determine the real cause of stomach pain and vomiting," the mayor added.

Police, who led the medical team in attending to patients from the villages of Kinitman, Bunakan and Nuro, said most of the patients complained of abdominal pain about three hours after eating anchovies.

"All of them are Indians and complained of severe stomach pain, vomiting and headache ... these are indications of poisoning," Nuro said.

Piang said people are used to eating kilawin, a very common species easily available in many public markets. "Baka may nahuling ibang isda na may lason (Perhaps some fish had been accidentally mixed with the catch), na di kasi kami pa," he added.

Some of the patients said they bought the fish, locally known sardines, in Sitio Cagalo in Barangay Malabor on Friday, cooked and ate it and then sick hours later started to vomit.

Others fought and ate the fish on Saturday but had stomach pains the following day.

Norie Mohammadin, Barangay Kagawad of Kinitman, claimed she suffered abdominal pains after eating a small serving of the fish. Her husband had taken much more and was rushed to the hospital.

Another village official of Barangay Bunakin, Pranis Lidak, said her husband never ate contaminated fish. Piang directed local government workers to help hospital staff put up huge tents to accommodate the rest of the hollow patients.

About 50 remained in the hospital yesterday, including 20 who were so much dehydrated. With AP and MP

We can't cancel Garci's passport—DFA

By Rob Cuaresma and TJ Burgonio

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs declared to set on Sen. Aquilino Pimentel's demand that Virginia Garcia's passport be canceled to avoid further flight. Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuncion explained that a passport could only be canceled on three grounds: when the holder has been declared by the court as a "fugitive from justice," when he has been convicted of a crime, or when the passport was acquired fraudulently or tampered with.

Asuncion was citing provisions of the Philippine Passport Act of 1996.

Pimentel yesterday urged the DFA to cancel Garcillano's passport to head off any attempts on his part to escape amid charges he helped rig last year's presidential elections.

The senator was reacting to reports that the former Elections commissioner had flown out of Manila for Singapore aboard a Lear jet last Thursday, reports that were later dismissed by administration lawmaker Sergio del Mar Rep. Pacquito Ocampo and senatorial officials.

When asked if the DFA could cancel Garcillano's passport even though he's not facing any charges in court, Pimentel said, "I suppose the DFA can, as a precautionary measure, because Garcillano may under the circumstances be viewed as a fugitive."

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero said yesterday that even as he is trying to contact Garcillano to convince him to come out and tell "the truth" about the "Glorietagate" tapes. With Philip C. Tubeza

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Tuesday, July 19, 2005
16th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ex 14:21–15:1
Gospel: Matthew 11:20-24

[Jesu]s began to reproach the towns in which most of his mighty deeds had been done, because they did not repent. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to the netherworld. For if the mighty deeds done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

Commentary:

This short piece of scripture has the dramatic flavor of a prophetic oracle. The prophet is often looking for him his mother and brothers and he does not get to them. He says and who disciples and decide to "Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is for me brother, sister, and mother." Jesus' mission is to gather others to the Father's family. Jesus is the only blood that will be shed on the Cross. Only the blood of Christ, of the king, especially those of those who suffer as he did, are we brother, sister and mother to Jesus.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW | R.A. No. 22 – SHOOTING THE CHICKEN LADY – Prima facie presumption of insufficiency of funds – Knowledge involves a state of mind difficult to establish, thus the statute itself creates a prima facie presumption of the drawer's lack knowledge of the insufficiency of his funds in or credit with the bank at the time of the issuance and or the check's presentment for payment if he fails to pay the amount of the check within five (5) banking days from notice of dishonor. As a rule, the prosecution has to duty to prove all the elements of the crime, including the acts that gave rise to the presumption. In this instance, on the other hand, has a right to rebut such presumption. Thus, if such knowledge of insufficiency of funds is proven to be actually absent or inexistent, the accused should not be held liable for the offense defined under the first paragraph of sec. 1 of B.P. Blg. 22. In the present case, the prosecution has established the prima facie presumption of knowledge of insufficiency of funds through the dishonored drawer was to prosecute, which was duly received by petitioner as shown by the registry return receipt. (Citations omitted.) (Antonio Lozano Dimaculangan, petitioner, vs. Court of Appeals, U.D. No. 14569, January 17, 2005). – Atty. D. B. Tuna

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Rosario

Iraq reels from suicide bombing blitz

AL-MUSAYYIB, Iraq—More than 140 Iraqis were killed and 300 wounded in a suicide bombing blitz as justice officials lifted the curtain on the trial of ousted dictator Saddam Hussein.

The deadliest attack came Sunday evening in the small town of Al-Musayyib, 50 km south of the capital, where suicide terrorists exploded near the wreckage of a fuel truck hauling dual-lifted 99 people.

Three more suicide car bombers hit the Iraqi capital on Sunday in a devastating new campaign.

The overnight attack in the highway town of Musayyib area the most lethal since the Iraqi government took power in April and the second deadliest single bombing since the war began in 2003.

It prompted condemnation of the subversive as parliament and rattled local militia to take up arms.

Some 15 suicide bombers have struck within just over 48 hours in the capital and along the main road south to where al-Qaida's Iraq wing has declared a new campaign to make Baghdad.

In Saturday's attack, a suicide bomber drove a stolen truck full of liquified gas onto the eastern outskirts of Musayyib and blew himself up, setting off a firestorm that torched 20 cars and set shops and buildings ablaze. Many victims were burned beyond recognition.

The bombing took place in Saturday outside injured the relative weakness at evening. It appeared to target a Shiite mosque, which also houses the local offices of supporters of radical cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

The attack was followed up within seconds by a mortar attack on the area.

"I saw 100 meters away where I am the fireball. It was enormous ... People were burning in their cars. We had to get them out with hooks," said Khodr Abbas, 24, who works at a local Sadr office.

"I saw women on the burning houses crying for help and we couldn't do a thing," he said.

One of the injured, Amman al-Battaghi, 40, said his son-in-law was passing through there with four cars of relatives and from Babylonia to escape the violence.

Police Lt. Hussein Ali said the square was normally closed off to Sadrist trucks, but he thought this one was let through a road block because the driver said he wanted to have his vehicle serviced.

"The driver then stopped his truck, got out, opened the

IRAQI scene comfort and other July 17 during the funeral of a relative who died in a horrific suicide-fuel truck bombing in a region in the town of Al-Musayyib, south of Baghdad. AFP

father's gas valves and blew himself up," Ali said.

With the country rocked by insecurity, Iraq's chief investigating judge Raed Juhi said that a date for the trial of Saddam and top aides would soon be announced after charges were brought against them in connection with a 1982 massacre.

The follows the conclusion of the investigation into the 1982 killing of 140 residents of the village of Dujail, northeast of Baghdad, after Saddam had survived an assassination bid there. Juhi said the Saddam denied the charges.

The former dictator, his stepbrother Barzan Ibrahim al-Hassan, former Vice President Taha Yassin Ramadan, former top judge Awad Hamid Al-Bandar and others will be tried in the case, he added.

Other investigations, including those of alleged genocide against the country's Kurdish and Shiite communities, were continuing, he said, adding that investigators had already exhumed more than two million documents and interviewed 3,000 witnesses.

Saddam, who was ousted by two years ago, has been in US detention, near Baghdad airport, since December 2003, as have most of his lieutenants.

The Iraqi parliament called for a minute's silence tomorrow on Wednesday to commemorate the Musayyib casualties and the 32 victims, most of them children, who died in a Wednesday car bombing in Baghdad.

Several legislators moaned that the current wave of attacks could push the country into civil war.

But Shiite cultural leader Moqtada Sadr said in an interview with British television he has "no intention" of launching a new campaign of violence.

Sadr shielded his people led by the coalition "occupation," the army said the BBC's "Newsnight" program to be first interview with a Shiite cleric since reconciliation.

But he added: "Resistance is legitimate as all levels be it religious, intellectual and social.

The three persons who would whom would be the first to be invited American President Bush, who said: If my country is occupied, I will fight." AFP, Reuters

Iraq war boosted al-Qaida, put UK at risk, says report

LONDON—The war in Iraq gave al-Qaeda "a boost" and made Britain exponentially vulnerable to attacks like those of July 7 in London, a respected British research center said in a report published Monday.

"There is no doubt that the situation is now how this improved our overall vulnerabilities for the UK, and for the wider coalition against terrorism," said the report by the Royal Institute of International Affairs (RIIA), known as Chatham House, in London.

"It gave a boost to the al-Qaida network conceptually, recruitment and fundraising, created a major split in the coalition, provided an ideal battleground, and deflected resources and attention away from Afghanistan and Pakistan where al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden is based."

The report went on: "A key problem with regard to implementing if the Iraqi regime for terror is that the UK government has been coerced into counterterrorism policy decisions to dissociate with the US, not in the sense of being an equal decision-maker, but rather as follower."

The report said the UK's participation in the war in Iraq "increased the terrorist threat to the UK and its citizens overseas."

The British security services were already concerned by the violence linked with the Northern Ireland conflict, especially the campaign of attacks by the Irish Republican Army (IRA), they said.

"By the mid-1990s the UK's intelligence agencies and the police were well aware that London was increasingly being used as a base by individuals involved in promoting, funding and planning terrorism in the Middle East and elsewhere," the report said.

"However, these individuals were not viewed as a threat to the UK's national security, and so they were left to continue their activities relatively unimpeded, a policy which caused much anger among the foreign governments concerned.

"As a result of giving lower priority to international terrorism, the British authorities did not fully appreciate the threat from al-Qaida," it said.

The report, however, noted successes in Britain's counter-intelligence and security and "also the throw of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the fact that al-Qaida "suffered major disruption of its activities and lost many of its key personnel." AFP

US firm buys Raffles hotels for $1B

THE RAFFLES Hotel in Singapore in photo dated June 1 PIC. AP

SINGAPORE—Singapore's historic Raffles Hotel and Raffles Holdings' 39 other luxury hotels around the world will be sold to US investment fund Colony Capital for US$1 billion, the two companies announced Monday.

The lease said the deal was worth 1.72 billion Singapore dollars (US$1.04 billion), made up of 1.46 billion dollars in cash with the balance being the value over of Raffles' debt.

Singapore government-linked Raffles Holdings is a portfolio of 40 hotels in 14 destinations worldwide, including the Raffles Grand Hotel d'Angkor in Cambodia and the Fairmont Hotels and Resorts chain.

Singapore conglomerate Pacific Land Limited is the majority owner of Raffles Holdings. The state-linked investment agency, Temasek Holdings, owns a 41 percent stake in Capital and.

Raffles Holdings said it had decided to sell its assets to capitalize on a deal it did not want to invest further to expand the business, while a favorable global climate meant the timing was right.

"While the hotel business has performed well, it is in a cyclical. To grow the hotel business to gain global scale will entail significant capital investment," Raffles Holdings chairman Cheng Wai Keung said in the statement.

"The strong performance of the hotel business combined with the current severe lift and it emerges and acquisition market presented a timely opportunity for RHL to realize value in the business." AFP

INQUIRER Platinum Code

What is a noun with four letters which means unpleasant physical sensation?

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Rats invade central HK

HONG KONG—Hong Kong's central business district, known for gleaming skyscrapers and fashionable bars, is being an invasion of rats.

Rodent sightings have soared, as the densely populated area's resident infestation rate swelled to 27 percent from zero, based on the number of rats attracted to every 100 metres of bait.

"Control was virtually cut-free a few months ago, then the situation deteriorated. The best to tackle the problem actively. What is important is sustained action," said Ho Hak-kin, a consultant with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department.

He attributed the influx to a poor regulator of construction in the area's old, run-down and poorly maintained buildings and much of drab alleyways.

Government officers are distributing pamphlets to educate restaurant workers about hygiene, food storage, rubbish disposal and rat prevention. Workers were also putting out poisoned bait.

The decline to note the second-most rat infested area in Hong Kong, behind a shopping district in rural New Territories. A rodent infestation rate above 20 percent is considered high. Reuters

Veterinarians say world vulnerable to agroterror

MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota—Veterinarians and animal health workers from around the world are meeting here to learn how to spot livestock diseases that terrorists could introduce to trash off farming regions.

"Agroterror would in fact be very easy to do, and we are quite vulnerable," said Dr. Corrie Brown, a professor and head of the Pathology Department at the University of Georgia's College of Veterinary Medicine.

Heightening the concern is a shortage of laboratories equipped to handle dangerous diseases, as well as a shortage in rural areas of veterinarians, who provide the first line between animal health and public health.

Animal diseases that could be terrorists to weapons. By terrorists are highly contagious seriously devastate has developed countries. Brown said at a joint committee of the American Veterinary Medical Association and the World Veterinary Congress.

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The Congress, attended by nearly 20,000 veterinarians and animal-health workers from 90 nations, has not met in the United States since 1996.

Saturday, the world's most prominent veterinary leaders were among those warning in Minneapolis from Foster and elsewhere for the first day conference.

Veterinary workers met on the front lines of countering the poisoned for outbreaks for because animals serve as sentinels for the presence of many diseases, said Bernard Vallat, director general of the Paris-based World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).

Vallat said he fears the intentional spread of diseases such as virus to illnesses, anthrax or rabies by terrorists better or harming both animals and the public. Other pathogens that directly affect livestock can devastate economies, he told AFP in Minneapolis.

"The foot-and-mouth disease virus could be a terrible agent for bioterrorism, because it could destroy totally the production of milk in a country," Vallat said.

Foot-and-mouth disease, which spreads fast and cheap as well as cattle, sheep, swine across the United States with devastating consequences if not caught within the first 24 hours, said Dr. Ronnie Brown, president of the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Veterinarians and other animal-health workers were attending training sessions this weekend, including on how to spot the illnesses, scans and other signs of exotic diseases.

During one session, Brown showed to the group photos of sick and deadly livestock diseases—many of which could kill humans—that was found in a cow in Afghanistan. The US government seems to be handled the list, Brown said. AFP

Wanted: Translators as immigrant births in US rise

HOUSTON, New York—The man from Bosnia was just not understanding. His wife was in labor at a crowded New York hospital and the doctor was trying to explain to English-only nurses his or Caesarean section.

Identified, the man translated frantically and told his wife the baby was dead, and it would have to be cut out of her. The woman, hysterical, thought the baby was healthy, she couldn't take care of it for a week.

Almost one in four American births is now to a foreign-born mother, according to a recent report by the Center for Immigration Studies. The result, medical experts and advocates say, is a growing pressure on American health care systems to not only deliver babies, but deliver them in many languages than one.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 says hospitals that get federal money must provide interpreter services. It just doesn't say how. Most hospitals reach out with phone-based interpretation services. But critics say the phone has limitations, especially during childbirth.

"When, are they going to pass the vaccine back and forth while the doctor is catching the baby?" asked Dr. Francesco Gany, director of the Center for Immigrant Health at the New York University School of Medicine. "Health care facilities are definitely feeling the heat."

The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations is studying the find for reasons medical error and interpretation issues, Gany said. And the National Health Law Program is looking at how small health care providers can offer language services. A report by the Washington-based Institute of Medicine said 56 percent of such providers surveyed had received no language training.

Though studies are under way, there are no national numbers for access to, or use of, interpreter services in health care. But there are some telling samples.

One hospital in Madison, Wisconsin, said requests for interpreters more than doubled, to more than 6,000 requests a year, between 2000 and 2005. In Columbus, Ohio, Children's Hospital in 2002 had almost 8,000 requests for interpreters.

A survey of New Jersey's cheapest cab drivers that in a largely urban state where 11 percent of residents have limited English, just 2 percent of hospitals have a full-time interpreter. Eighty percent of hospitals offer no staff training on working with interpreters, and 21 percent have no multilingual signs.

Cost is a barrier and most hospitals told the New Jersey survey that reimbursement for translation services is needed. AP

SEE ALSO: Former Prime Minister Edward Heath in an April 29, 2002 photo. AP

Former British leader Edward Heath dies at 89

LONDON—Tributes poured in Monday for former British leader Sir Edward Heath who has died aged 89, with fellow political veterans Margaret Thatcher describing him as a "political giant" and Prime Minister Tony Blair calling him a "man of great integrity."

Heath, most famously remembered for leading Britain into Europe, passed away on Sunday after growing weak in recent days, a spokesperson said.

Despite only serving one term in office from 1970 until 1974, the famously rude Britain was what was then the European Economic Community, the forerunner to the European Union.

It was a rare moment of triumph during Heath's time in frowning blood, which was overwhelmingly remembered for his more popular Labour Party foe Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

In a formidable political career, Heath led the Conservative Party from 1965 to 1975, when he was succeeded by the then-largely scorned Thatcher.

He felt snubbed and never forgave Thatcher, lapsing into what was popularly dubbed "the longest sulk in modern politics."

Friends say his feelings toward her mellowed after she, too, left Downing Street and she offered warm words of tribute.

"Sir Heath was a national giant," Thatcher said.

"He was also, in every sense, the first modern Conservative leader—by his humble background, his grammar school education and by the fact of his democratic election," she said.

She praised his work during the difficult post-Cold War 1990s.

"For that, and much else besides, we are all in his debt," she said.

Heath, the lower middle class son of a carpenter and a domestic servant who won a place at Oxford University from his local state school, was viewed by his then largely patrician party as a useful weapon with which to outmaneuver Wilson's man of the people image.

Yet despite his background, Heath lacked one trait of common touch. He antagonized most political rivals and colleagues—middling, either in the party or in the wider country.

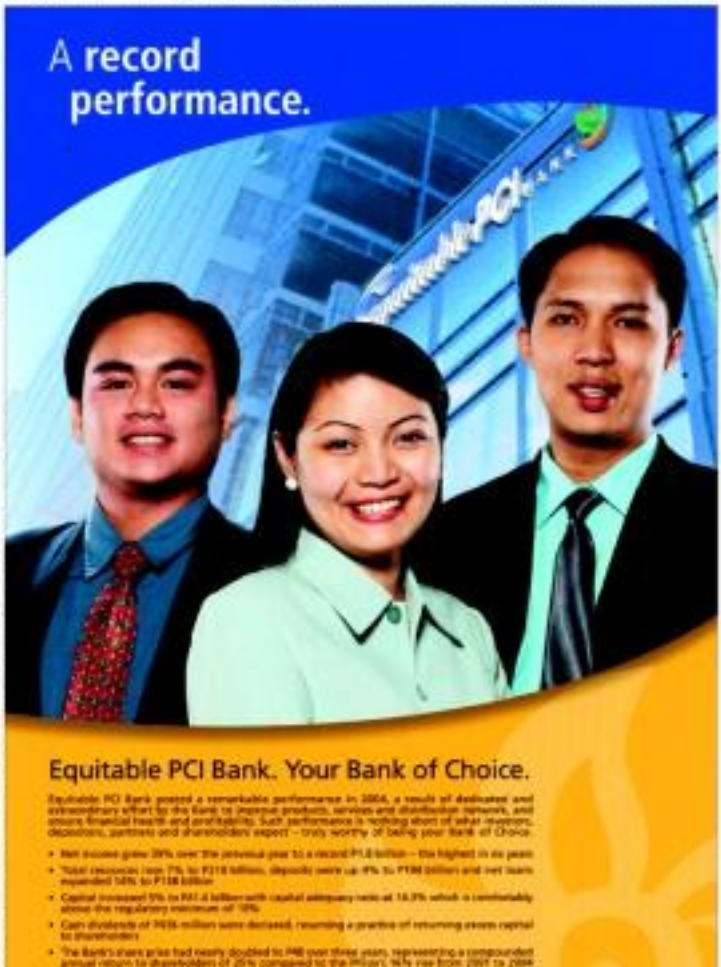
Much of his premiership was marked by militant trade union activism, notably by miners, and a wave of strikes and energy shortages in the winter of 1973-74 eventually led Heath to dissolve a three-day working week.

"He wouldn't feel he was doing his job properly unless he was heard a lot," one colleague of the time, James Prior, famously said.

Heath called an election for February 1974 on the slogan "Who governs Britain?" to which the voters' answer, possibly aimed at the Unions, was: "Not you."

The election saw no party secure a majority and in another poll in October Wilson swiped home with a five-seat margin. The next year the Conservatives deposed Heath as leader in favor of Thatcher.

An increasingly impatient and pink-faced Heath lashed at the back benches of the House of Commons for another 25 years, only retiring at the 2001 election after more than half a century in parliament. AFP



Inq Box

Question of the Week

Do you think the planned image makeover of President Gloria Arroyo into a friendlier, gentler president will work?

Senders of a text JO both as published in Tuesday's Inq Box will each receive an "Inquirer Short's"

INQUIRER

OPINION

Period of waiting

THE UNITED Opposition is urging President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign. Sixty-two percent of Metro Manila residents believe she should quit. Former President Corazon Aquino also wants her to resign. The "Hyatt 10" is urging her to quit. Many business, professional, religious and academic groups say she should step down. The President has said, however, that she is not resigning.

EDITORIAL The opposition is now considering impeaching her. But even if it pushes through, the impeachment court will take a long time to reach a resolution, unless something like Edsa II happens. So it seems that Ms Arroyo will be with us for some time yet. And while the question of whether she should stay in office remains unresolved, political and economic instability is likely to continue.

In an effort to make Ms Arroyo more acceptable to the people, her advisers are planning a makeover to project her as a friendlier, gentler President. This is a cosmetic move, and no doubt it will earn her points. It would be better if she did something that would greatly benefit the country in the interim. The first priority should be the economy, which has taken a heavy beating the past few weeks. The President has taken the first step by appointing replacements for the members of her economic team who resigned recently. We hope that the new appointees would attend immediately to the serious economic problems of the country.

An early resolution of the constitutional challenge to the expanded value-added tax law by the Supreme Court could help promote stability on the economic front. Then new Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buenaventura could have the strict enforcement of the expanded VAT and continue the aggressive collection of taxes begun by his predecessor, Guillermo Parayno. The government needs a lot of funds, and it needs them now.

Under the Constitution the President cannot fire the commissioners of the Commission on Elections. But she could enlist the help of civil society and the political parties in ensuring pressure on the election commissioners to tender their resignation. The commissioners should initiate that the Comelec is one of the most discredited government agencies today. A reform of the electoral process has to begin with the cleaning of the Comelec.

If a mass resignation of the Comelec commissioners can be obtained, the President should avoid packing it with disreputable characters and "dependable" political allies. She should consider appointing to the Comelec people of the caliber of its former chairs, Christian Monsod and Haydee Yorac. The nation will be grateful if she can clean up the August public thrift in the Comelec. The cleanup can all be the start of wide-ranging reforms in the electoral system.

It is not just the electoral system that needs changing. The political system also needs to be changed to promote national stability. Since Edsa I in 1986, the nation has gone through many periods of political instability. Now may be an auspicious time to change the system, from presidential to parliamentary. A parliamentary system makes it possible to quickly change an administration since its leader loses the confidence of his or her parliamentary peers and the people. Then there would be no need for bumper Edsas.

Reports the day after Ms Arroyo survived the most serious challenge to her presidency said that because of his support, former President Fidel V. Ramos would now have his way in his efforts to move the nation from the presidential to the parliamentary system. Under Ramos' timetable, Congress would convene as a constituent assembly to propose changes in the Constitution. Civil society and the opposition are expected to oppose the idea of convening a constituent assembly because Congress is another discredited institution.

It would be better to call a constitutional convention. It may be more expensive, but the election of delegates to the convention may see the emergence of young, new leaders who could bring new perspectives and new ideas to the task of crafting the fundamental law. The body politic also needs a shot of fresh blood to invigorate and renew itself.

In this especially long period of waiting, the President could set to the national interest if she would put the economic house in order, help bring about electoral reforms, beginning with a change in the Comelec, and start the ball rolling for a change from the presidential to the parliamentary system.

Who will be Ali Baba?

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

[illegible] Zamora's eyes don't pose some over people power. The late Juan ponsonnet hailed Ferdinand Marcos, then Joseph Estrada. People power boomerangs on both, both ended in "Extrajudicial Institutionalized "Lea of the Month, More Corrupt Leader"—among the Top 10 as does.

Some regard that as failure to read these lessons and history. But all agree Zamora can resign. Thus, his rallies are candid. "I don't think you're going to get (the President)" one with the rallies that we're holding," Zamora admits. But "the numbers are moving toward our direction" for impeachment.

Former Senate Cabinet member Mona Mercado revealed that one million would join their rallies today. Forty thousand came. That's a gulping 4-percent. Out of every 100 potential protesters, 96 didn't even RSVP.

Equally telling is the protestors' refusal to sign up. In rallies present, the homicidally misguided Erap, is no spy, only Marcos.

So, what's the reason for the flop? One is failure to credit responsible administration. All they tell are 40 duties squabbling over who elevated Ali Baba.

Erap suggests bring back Erap," notes Philippine Rotary Mindpol (dig Gabi ni Rizal Mel." a many pointed listeners react. "Ten Cents wants Jason Bono in order even But Atty says it should be Jane, while Billy Bibit thinks it should be Jinggoy Estrada.

"Key to National Democratic front says it should be a coalition government, with them in the helm. Bandolan says it should be a revolutionary government.

"Hero," think the Cuneo whom Alfo CBN wants to be the new president. Not so fast, says Loren Legarda. She reminds everyone democ[illegible] deserve against Mob.

Ping Lacson's body language points to his presidency. Not true, Ping. says over to Jinggoy should be? And Frank Drilon and Manny Villar think it should be them. So they're positioning to be the vice president."

"We do not demand (the President's) resignation," the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines said on July 10. Instead, the bishops asked she look to "Heaven to what sin/s we she might have contributed to erosion of [illegible] governance and relentless (the erosion is ... irreversible."

A Social Weather Stations phone survey, two days later, found that 69 percent of Metro Manila residents don't believe she should resign.

Impeachment is the "tribunal where consensus Lies itself," not on the streets of massive jurisprudence, but upon the outraged and solid principles of morality," the pronouncement of retired Ruler once said. Does our impeachment square with that yardstick? Consider these three steps.

In the impeachment case lodged against Elections Commissioner Garcillano, Bantay says charges were damning. She awarded a P6.9-billion contract to a hedge of P1.2billion for security registration project that disenfranchised thousands. With other Poll commissioners, she ignored the massive cheating of the election. But House panel committee members thumbed the impeachment complaint down without serious explanation. Betraying their own rules, Administration members dropped their signatures. Result: Not a single Congressman has to date, tied to 2004 voters' names. In the thousands, disappeared from the rolls.

Eduardo Cojuangco's "Iron Deck" in the House could be crippled. Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Jr. The Executive Committee (Excom) is made up of 10 members: Cojuangco's top six cronies love funds. Bureau Jose to Jesus banks, Mark Jimenez's connections and Danilo Lacson's link to the fast-moving fishing market.

"To the complaint's crimes. Divide a worry thing a public official shouldn't be," the bureaucrats Emily David wrote. "He does not guard [illegible] rules with impunity. Now he's being taught a lesson by young many of those who already imagined themselves for the seaboard."

Cuneo cosmos and dogged swimmers by impeachment lawyers Frederic Cuneo Jr., Raul del Mar and other upright legislators stopped the "Iron Deck" to to shelve. So, Virginia, there we still desire congressmen.

In Single impeachment, People Power I championed abstraction objective by the Cyrano Darets," John Osmeña, Francisco "Kit" Tatad, Leonozig Sobejana-Saweedi, Teresita Aquino Oreta and Ginggy Beltran are two faces in black in the polls. The thing Cardinal Sin[illegible] says relates to them: "Had I served and died with Ninoy, I could not say, he would not have, as old age left me inured to time enemies."

This witch wizard doctor respects human beings to this country's ancestors love. "Their dads not gonna be in front of this pole."

Campaign's "Iron Deck" failed constitutional imbalance to punish those who lost no moment's sullen. The Tim Lopez and Erap cases put several cowboys powers to mount their easy to offer.

Even more worry. If a majority vote stability from presidents, as the opposition rightly insists. But this same unreconcilable issue be forthcoming also from the opposition who muddle around checks and balances, imbuing impeachment.

The present system is unwieldy. Its vulnerable to corruption and replacement by a military dictatorship or presidential monarchy," notes the Christian Science Monitor. Harold Ivo and Marcos confirm that.

Other countries have [illegible] of indecisive democracies here parliamentary regimes where officials are not shielded by rigid fixed terms. For us, such changes are still down the road. But we can do better on such reform score.

Other countries have long converged and had the illusion of a no-low crisis is emerging in the Iberian peninsula. Can we not, in Asia, steer beyond Zamora's breakdowns and tactile uncertainty who will be Ali Baba?

E-mail: juan_mercado@inq7.net

President, pauper

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I [illegible] writing a column upon speculation that Millionaires learners rule and point I remember vaguely only parts of it, which was something like this.

If you're rich, you're nervous; if you're poor, you're bored. If you're rich, you're a man of the world; if you're poor, you're a dopester. If you're rich, you're an institute of success; if you're poor, you're a dreamer. If you're rich, you're defensive; if you're poor, you're a crank. If you're rich, you prefer if you're poor, you need. If you're rich, you love women; if you're poor, you're penchant. If you're rich, you are impressed; if you're poor, you're dazzled

Regrouping of middle forces

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cantiveros

LAST Sunday's protest rally at the Luneta topped by political heavyweights Senator Noynoy Aquino and Senator Loi Estrada left the organizers elated with the huge crowd. The perception stems from the fact that hundreds of buses and jeeps lined up across Roxas Boulevard. It took it a point to note that rally fans are "a class by themselves, rally fans. Mediamen from a tabloid paper, in order get the jeepfare and food coupons. (Rallies are also an excellent source of interviews for political journalists, as we publicists know, are all about.)

From what I saw there was indeed holes or hardcandies, but then, what rally could be complete without it? For instance, in the Ipapos rally, Panfilo Lacson, Sen. Ed Angara and Senator-to-be Gringo Honasan provided some pizzazz for the crowd with their scintillating wit, but he did not give the ice anything. I suppose the principal reason is that given the difficulty in securing ice these days, a leader is assured of delivering for lesser, if not lower temperatures.

* * *

One thing I noticed at the Luneta rally was that many of the middle forces that filled Edsa I and II were present there. Among the groups I saw were the Makati Business Club, the Bantay Ng Bayan and the Kamalayan, who came with their own banners and his-own-t magic, the human sign-up of votes to discharge and ballot-boxer constructed from the Kamalayan banner. Not to be left out, Chat printed rally paraphernalia in the colors of civil society, and the resident comedy was, "Ano ba iyo, 30 years after Edsa ito'ng-ka-isahan ng mga tao?" Backyard Cabinet members Bimby Gullman and Ging De-Asis-Reyes also showed up, and Bimby, in his usual sanitary groups, but is loathe like GMA has also remained her following among the middle forces. One reason may be their fear that a post-GMA leadership may have a more militant, or even left of the opposition leaders seem to have the ears from the below-it-to-it the government.

* * *

The forces missed by many observers is the labor-based civil society assembly of their leaders are not in the streets in support of EDSA. The Luneta rally drew huge support for Cebu transfer load governor, Gwen Garcia. 13 out of the 17 Metro Manila mayors are for her, the only ones against her being Jejomar Binay (Pateros) and Alfredo Lim (Manila).

* * *

**Many of the labor leaders are for Garcia because of the Cebu governor's generosity in their behalf. Garcia is also reported to be the favorite of the Catholic hierarchy, which is the biggest financial donor in the area, is never the biggest in the country when it comes to the size of the bishop's residence, but is the biggest in the country when it comes to the size of the bishop's residence, but is the biggest in the country when it comes to the size of the bishop's residence, but is

Shutting up the militants

If I were in Manila right now, I would also initiate a demonstration—but neither against Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo nor the opposition, but against the militant groups. These groups always act as corrupt principled governments: But what they preach in committee when they practice.

Talk about principle. They bellied Cory Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada, Gloria, Joseph Estrada, then Gloria again. Now they're back to Nikki's with Bros. Manzano and JV Ejercito on the Senate. They remember the metropolis into their garbage containers during their rallies. They vandalize the LRT and MRT posts with their proclamations. And the best part: a return a bunch of cans of tin-mild, and ground to drink the CPR? Not to mind their hard-earned money so their families so as to promote EDSA to stop down. "Don't feed your family so GMA will step down!"

Puerile, you can see how unreasonable these people can be: the CPRF maintenance serves as our economy's pillar: if they aren't sure, the Philippines would be transformed from a country to just a piece of land in no time.

Talk about industry and successbuilding. Many workdays, days are in Makati, in Ilaw or in Mendiola, which would make one assume that these people are employed or always on leave. They don't go to work so they don't put taxes. They don't pay taxes yet they are the ones who demand so much from the government.

Talk about poverty alleviation. Instead of spending their funds on democratization measures, why don't they just use them to help the poorest of our own system, or even themselves? They can very well use it to start their own small projects or cooperatives. They can for all real help to the poor if they just try to avoid being idle.

Here's the big deal: to "finance" our current constitutional convention, they insist on putting up a civilian council to replace the presidency. Here's the catch: they must be part of the council.

I really wish the middle-class workers in our country would start a protest action against these militant groups not for anything really but just to make themselves up.

—LESTER L. JOYER,
Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering Co. Ltd,
Koyangsan, Republic of Korea

MILITANTS burn an effigy of President Macapagal-Arroyo

Not a representative of SSS members

Jill a longtime member of the Social Security System, I consider Conrado Estrella's pronouncement in behalf of SSS members in the big, volatile PCIBank controversy hotly interested insolence.

When Estrella, de Dios and the SSS went into their secret agreement last year for the purchase of 565 shares in EPCIB at phantom buying rate, he was loud in his support of the commissioner and the SSS board. Only a few days after opposed the deal, harboring less. Despite Estrella Jill said the family of Chair Antonio Eto. He did not consider the interest and welfare of SSS members then.

When EDC and the SSS shareholders announced their Series-five stock scheme, which favored EDC and tagged the same loss every five years, the SSS shares, Estrella vigorously opposed the scheme. He even criticized the treasury and workers' organizations that filed a case before the Supreme Court to stop the sale. He did not suffer short-term decrease and welfare of the SSS members.

How dare EDC and the SSS, together with the Government for the sole interests Senate and Mikey Bolsadaba, have worked up a new scheme for EDC's takeover of EPCIB, to a again totally to support of the plan. But this time around, he is saying that he is doing it in behalf of the millions of SSS members.

Estrella has a right to his opinion, whatever it may be. But he should not the crap that he is speaking for us, SSS members.

—RAMON ROBES,
Rbt. Northern Samar,
ramonrobes@yahoo.com.ph

Public school in Quezon collects fees

THIS complaint may seem to be late because the school year has started. But I think this should be known by the concerned authorities.

It was announced that no fees should be collected from elementary and high school students when they enroll in public schools. But this has been breached by the administration of a provincial public high school in Quezon province.

My sister and my cousin went to the school to enroll their children. During the teachers asked them to pay P400 (maximum fee!) for my cousin's admission to the school. As proof of payment, they were given a piece of paper indicating they already paid that particular amount.

Maybe this should be investigated. I believe this fee was illegal. And I am concerned for the less fortunate who could not pay the entrance fee.

Accordingly, many parents were very disappointed. Our then didn't have any choice. It is for us to public high school in town. There was another school there but it was closed down two years ago.

We must have told me that, as the school year progresses, more fees are being collected but these are not announced for. She said the parents can't find a way to tell the officials who are very prominent and powerful in town. This has been the parents' problem over the years.

—JANE WYRSELD
Quezon City

LETTERS

Proclamation constitutional

THIS is with regard to the news item titled "IT expert says GMA could use term limit by 7-M vote," (PDI, 7/13/05) in which Deputy Executive Secretary Ricardo Saludo said that the opposition challenged the National Board of Canvassers (NBC) when it refused an open-votes just one EB from one of the Alliluit provinces.

The Commission provides in Article 6, Section 4, that it is the Presidential Electoral Tribunal (PET), not the National Canvassing Board, that has jurisdiction over charges of electoral fraud. The role of the NBC is tempered to its nature as defined in the 1989 OmniCase will allow the outcome of the proceedings there will show that the opposition wanted the canvassing committee to go through the election returns of 1 out of the 139 certificates of canvass.

If the NBC had acceded to that opposition request, it would have committed an illegal and unconstitutional act. Section 30 of BA 7166 (An Act Providing for Synchronized National and Local Elections) allows the opening of election returns only in an examination, not as a rule, when it appears that any certificate of canvass or any supporting statement of returns by province/town/barangay or alleging which may cast doubt as to the veracity of the number of votes. Only there can the EBs be opened. The fact that the votes of the opposition had the same opinion of COCs, and the veracity of such was all certain.

The opposition wanted the NBC to be the PET. This was obviously to circumvent the Constitution. If the opposition had its way then, facts would have been no consideration for years as such elections senate, considering thousands, several hundreds of COCs in the same scrutiny by the powers of all candidates as such certificate of canvass. Clearly, this was not the intent of the framers of the Constitution.

It is erroneous, assuming that there was electoral fraud committed as alleged, the unconscionable remedy was to have the matter brought to the PET. What we did in 1986 was to have a revolution, like the Freedom in June 2004, upon determining the unlawful, by and the execution of the CoCs, was committed with the supervision of the Commission. It was to fulfillment of a constitutional duty.

In addition, were the opposition acted to delay the national canvass by bringing matters to the Supreme Court and asking for a temporary restraining order or injunction, provided that the same was done without violating the Constitution.

—ATTY. FRANCISCO A. MANGUIAT JR.,
Rm. 307 DBD Financial Center,
Aseas Boulevard, Pasay City

Anti-people practice of the MMDA

IT was not I who was involved but a private vendor, perhaps, with a family to feed, like you, like any other, like everybody else (who is barely able to cope with the soaring prices basic commodities and services).

Unfortunately, he was not able to run away when MMDA men in blue (MIB) suddenly got off their "cars" trash and were after him and the other vendors, this one along with his goods was brusquely carried into the MMDA truck. I stood there like many other passersby. After the MIB had left, I asked him if he could still get back his cart (no, it, dismay and utter helplessness, he just shook his head).

The way he was treated was downright heartless and I couldn't help crying as I walked away from the vendor. I wanted to stop the MIB men from taking away the man's cart but I didn't. I couldn't help the vendor and his cart. I just pulled me and made me angry.

I am writing this in the hope that in the way I could look evil's humor for such an injustice, that people who see the MIB every day on their customary attack against the unemployed vendors would appear and fight the abusive, arrogant, anti-people practices of the MMDA.

I have seen a child vendor, so young as 12, whose feet was severely scalded by the boiling water of a vendor's cart. I have tried to save his cart from attacking MIB. I have seen an old woman struggle with about four MIB who were trying to grab her small tarantula, cigarettes and betel nuts. In helplessness, she was only able to utter, "Hirang hindi din kayo makatulog." The goal of this vendors was existence in the passersby, jeep passengers and drivers (who themselves have conflicts with the MMDA traffic enforcers) who witnessed these inhuman attacks.

In this the best time the government can do to improve upon the people that it is "doing" something? Is this what the MMDA chair claims as "unheralded," "disciplinary" or "peace and order in the streets"?

These vendors have families to feed. It is hard from the table that they are deprived of what they are driven away from the streets.

The government's continuing of this unjust and inhuman treatment is not the answer to the disorder and traffic in the metropolis. If the government had only provided jobs for the people, then nobody would opt to peddle their wares in the streets. The point is, the employment rate has been on an rise increasing mind and basic needs are where are very low in terms of quality and access as the country suffers throughout financial crisis.

With so many unemployed, underemployed and invisible congresses, the people are forced to work as menial jobs. Mom-up pulling of oil, government agencies, such as the MMDA, are making the matters even harder for the majority of the people to survive.

—RAY VARGAS
executive director,
National Minority
Resource Center,
Barangay Pitogo,
Silliman, Quezon City

Pichay wrong on LGC Logistics

THIS is with reference to the news article "Pichay accuses Lina, Palatino of corruption," (PDI, 7/13/05). We would like to correct the wrong data for the public's information, that LGC logistics is not involved in irregularities as Rep. Prospero Pichay suggests.

While it is true that former Customs Commissioner Sam Lina's policies and programs in the Bureau included the establishment of an intention-based, one-stop system to facilitate the acceptance of the export and import services, these were completed before he assumed the presidency of LGC Logistics, Inc. The programs were designed to reduce the cost of business and at the same time keep the forwarding industry in tandem with the requirements of the global competitive edge.

Moreover, and more importantly, he completely divested his business interests prior to his assumption as commissioner. The business divestiture involved also the former commissioner's interest in public utility companies.

—ATTY. ANTONIO M. ESTRELLA,
vice president for corporate services,
LGC Logistics Inc.,
Carmelray Industrial Park 1,
Km. 54, National Highway,
Barangay Saimo, Calamba, Laguna

Did she talk to God?

AMEN. Did "many words of wisdom" in your newspaper last July 13 on the subject matter of Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' statement, we were particularly struck by Bella Gloria Cabanos's "...there are no easy answers. There's complexity involved in the Holy Spirit..." Are we to infer that Cabanos's source was the Holy Spirit himself, herself?

This reminds us of Thomas Szasz's famous quote: "When you talk to God, that is prayer; when God talks to you, that is schizophrenia."

—MARGARET ORLANES
and JESSE RAZEL,
Quezon City

Inquirer

Amid the confusion and controversies, what are your hopes and dreams for our country and people?

Kailangan mat ing matatag ki-nat ki-yanang!
—cynthia g. enriquez, marikina

I have lived officials will stop their corrupt practices & send a d good of it! Hopefully they will! good. Justice will strengthen.
—arlan, 38, iloilo

enough food, decent shelter, good education, good paying jobs a shortage of religious freedom, and safety.
—cedric c. diana, 40,

d every Filipino, I uphold the constitution & live their dreams of a more peaceful & prosperous country.
—Cristobal Fernandez, 31, Dagupan City

MY hope is that 1,047,123,456, just 1/2 that 2/3 X 9,000's of my OFW's, STAY, I'd still be filing it THERE!!! or at least 20%. I HATE!!!
—edwin c. mendoza, 38, baguio city

I hope all those ill-motivated political bickering will stop so that the economy will recover.
—Joey Pena, 38, Dagupan City

Im not only Buying and Dreaming but I'm also Praying 4 LOVE, PEACE and UNITY 4 everyone of us and in our nation. GOD BLESS!!!
—ashley penny, pasay

I want the situation I find in the Philippines to be different and a MIRACLE to happen.
—Robbie I Dhesaigue, 30, Ifugao

I hope we same neighborliness ng pagkakaisa sa mga tao, sana hindi na rin maging manggagawang ang ipinapinoy, sana maganda nah ang kinita...
—Jessi Gutierrez, Tarlac City

I hope our leaders will stop acting selfishly. Their self-serving actions have destroyed country.
—Sacred Santillan, davao City

I wish BIR, ID (TIN#05-have 2 letters) I already renewed over 1 YEAR DO and collect every week/ supervisor.
—cindie ancheta, 28, manila

My hope that it [...] GMA will survive 30 Days PEACEFUL & ECONOMIC CRISIS NO. 1 NO. 90 Peso months. (years 8 each's quit)
—cherie l. mendiola, 28, baguio city

I hope that if people of philippines don't start their discipline and pray + peace as did God's Will, will prevail
—jose francisco diaz, 46, olongapo

that all people will have good & safe Filipino work & that people will be corrupt & greft-free.
—gloia miguel, san mateo, rizal

perhaps we Filipinos can somehow change starting with how we view ourselves as Filipinos that we may love pride, act with discipline.
—Jan D. Lapuz, 28, mandaluyong city

Dream to unite as Filipino at Filipino/ Solving dream my friend's to pass or Lapas at Lapas Filipino.
—L. Bacano Martin, San Agustin, Isabela

The UNITED NATION and UNIONS, MEDIA, PUBLIC of The PEOPLE POWER to government and to people.
—Greg Gamos, Intramuros, manila

my hope is my dream in our country I know its impossible, but lets keep on dreaming.
—BULDAR H. PISANG, 31, SAN RAMON city

I'll write request America I can span as again & be 1 of the citizens. Pang-christian ko dun I learned, but corrupt politicians.
—Mona Bongga, 19, Iligan City

that someday we will no longer b pitied as asians & outsiders. May we find d value of unity as a only Filipino of our country.
—ramchelle montalbo, 19, marikina

my hope is our country & pipol adopt d confusion & controversies... diet they may want & pilipit d food, n all, pacific can plot on news...
—cindy l. ballista-an, 19, bacoor city

I hope that our country will be peaceful, and will another mo comes that our country's experiencing.
—Eliseo Raul Barte-Gaming, 34, Tagbilaran

I hope na matapos na ang problema, at sabihan na ang kanilang kapuso.
—Jaclien Magbalon, 13, Tarlac S.B.S

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Moreover, and more importantly, he completely divested his business interests prior to his assumption as commissioner. The business divestiture involved also the former commissioner's interest in public utility companies. We may provide information that some politicians may legally require, because keep an eye of politics and unbiased and baseless charges.

—ATTY. ANTONIO M. ESTRELLA,
vice president for corporate services,
LGC Logistics Inc.,
Carmelray Industrial Park 1,
Km. 54, National Highway,
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—MARGARET ORLANES
and JESSE RAZEL,
Quezon City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

Ten for Tiger

Woods takes 2nd British Open by 5 shots

ST ANDREWS, Scotland—The 2005 season started with dreams of golf's "Big Five" fighting it out for the Majors.

After three of those, reality has been restored. It's back to the "Big One" and the rest are reduced to scrambling for the crumbs.

Tiger Woods was the Masters, could not pull to save his life but will come second in the US Open and wins the 134th British Open with commanding display of controlled golf.

Weird? No. I Tiger Alegh, Retief Goosen and Jose Garcia all had a chance of snatching it on Woods during the last couple over the Old Course on Sunday.

Peter Dawson already out of contention.

They didn't even come close. The 29-year-old Woods simply moved up a gear to play a form of golf that even impressed him.

Woods cruised to victory by five shots with a closing 71 at the 134th British Open on Sunday to clinch the 130th major title of his career.

He never trailed from the final 63 holes of St. Andrews and earned for the first time to write victory at the Open in 32 years.

The world No. 1, champion at St. Andrews in 2000, hardly put a foot wrong as he never only flawless golf to add to his 2000 Open win but also to his other grand slam events at least twice.

Back in his very first bunker, the 29-year-old American went into the bunker conditions on the Old Course to finish at 14-under 274.

He now stands third in the all-time list behind Jack Nicklaus (18) and Walter Hagen (11).

"It's a dream come true to win at the home of golf," said exhilarated Woods.

"All the hard work I've got in... this is one of the courses I've made the change, so I could be back here again at this level," added Woods, who spent much of last year revamping his swing by this second time since turning professional in 1996.

Leader from day one after opening with a 66, Woods was never headed during the week although his advantage was hardly cut to one on the last day when he bogeyed the previous 10th

PAGE A-18

ON TOP OF THE WORLD: Tiger Woods cuddles the Open's Claret Jug after winning the British Open golf championship at St Andrews in Scotland on Sunday. AFP

Court nixes cage body's TRO plea

By Nonong R. Cuerdo

THE MANILA Regional Trial Court yesterday denied the Basketball Association of the Philippines' request for a temporary restraining order (TRO) over the impending election of the expelled cage body from the premises of the Philippine Sports Commission.

Judge Reynaldo G. Roa of the Manila RTC-Branch 20 rejected the BAP's request for lack of merit. He set the hearing on the BAP's application for preliminary injunction for Friday at 10 a.m.

The senior men that the PSC can now proceed to hand over the BAP reins to old officers as the government-owned complex on Vito Cruz.

The Philippine Olympic Committee on June 30 recognized the cage body from its ranks for failing to adhere to a command issued among local basketball's major stakeholders.

The development confirmed an Inquirer report on Sunday when PSC executive director Guillermo Iroy said that the BAP's court request had no legal leg to stand on.

Meanwhile, presidential daughter Luli Arroyo-Lacson will meet with more than 500 athletes at the Metro Against Diabetes today as part of a program to break the spirit of the athletes for the coming Manila Southeast Asian Games.

Luli will be joining leaders of President Macapagal-Arroyo, who had been named the PSC Chairperson's daughter, due to pressing commitments.

Also slated to join the proceedings will be Mel Gendrano, Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, the prime mover of the Ifi Sports Foundation which is spearheading a huge training program for the athletes.

Mr. Arroyo is currently overseas.

Regional swimmers, weightlifters, shot-putters and gymnasts will also not be around. Plans to these events are still in different southern provinces in China.

RP cagers bow to towering Passing Lane in Global tilt

THE PHILIPPINES' lace dutch-calibre roster for tonight as it yielded to Boeing Lane, 80-71, in the first Global Hoops festival at the Cox Pavilion on the UNLV Campus in Las Vegas on Sunday (Monday in Manila).

Scoring only five points in the last period, the Filipinos trailed by as many as 19 points, 49-30, but rallied behind Ben Ben Mendoza going to the last 8 minutes.

Mendoza, making off former Washington Inland guard led Mississippi knotted in 10 points in the fourth period to score to a game high-seven triples and 27 points.

Passing Lane, boasting six-person players by 7-footer Brian Hopkins of Maryland and 9-11 Cedric Bozeman of Pepperdine, evened close 39-point bubble early in the third quarter.

The scores:

BOEING LANE 80—Bozeman 22, Jones 9, Hall 10, Washington 5, Jones 9, Johnson 7, Hopkins 8, Miller 2, Bing 2, Brooks 2, Anderson 2.

RP 71—Ellasus 27, Anderson 12, Johnson 8, Jamerson 7, Cortez 5, Anderson 5, Miller 3, Mak 2, Jo Lim 2, Ingal, Alvarez 1, Manuel 1, Yuson.

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Burgonio

RP safe from bird flu, tests show

By Jim Gomez
Associated Press

A LOW RISK version of bird flu has been found at a Bataan duck farm but the country remains free of the deadly strain that has ravaged other Southeast Asian poultry industries, officials said yesterday.

The findings were contained in an initial report by an Australian laboratory, which examined samples from both the duck farm in Calumpit town in Bulacan where authorities detected the first case of bird flu on July 8.

"The Philippines is free from any highly pathogenic avian influenza," Dr. Oie Jeon Jeong of the Australian Animal Health Laboratory said in a statement. "The duck flu found here expanded to a low pathogenic avian influenza virus, but their natural genetic capacity diminished. The form I felt. The strain."

Since 2003, tens of millions of chickens have died of bird flu or have been slaughtered to limit and fortified fear. At least 54 people have died in Vietnam, Thailand and Cambodia, most of them after coming into contact with birds infected with the H5N1 virus.

Indonesia has announced the deaths of three people who were suspected to have been infected with bird flu, though that has not been confirmed.

The director of the Philippine Bureau of Animal Industry, Jose Molina, said a 3.4-kilometer quarantine zone around the Calumpit farm will be lifted after 200 ducks were culled following the discovery of the low-risk avian flu strain.

Officials also plan to ask the Paris-based World Organization for Animal Health to remove the Philippines from a list of countries hit by bird flu, and will continue strict surveillance to prevent future infection, Molina said.

He said the ducks in Calumpit may have been infected by migratory birds.

Agriculture and health officials reminded the public that only well-cooked and properly cooked ducks and eggs, including a popular delicacy called "balut," were safe to eat.

The Philippines' 150 billion-peso poultry industry employs 300,000 people.

Officials have been closely watching 15 areas, mostly mangroves and watering holes of migratory birds that can carry the virus, while imposing an import ban on live or uncooked poultry from at least 11 affected countries.

Molina said the virus in ducks was not transmitted to chickens.

"The movement of low-chicken can be allowed subject to the usual shipping permit requirement. However, movement of ducks in the area be restricted to negative flocks based on surveillance tests by BAI and the Bulacan agricultural and veterinary offices," he said.

He also recommended the creation of new protocols for duck raising.

Bataan officials welcomed the news on Monday by eating low cal (duck) and balut (fertilized duck eggs) to show that Bataan is free from the bird flu virus. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

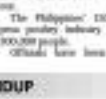
DuCKS series at a pond in Calumpit amid reports of the entry of the bird flu virus in the area. AUTHOR

ROUNDUP

Major shoots colonel dead

CAMP DOMOCOL, Maguindanao—An army major shot dead his superior inside the headquarters of Army's 602nd Infantry Brigade in Carmen, North Cotabato on Saturday. Maj. Antonio Peralta, commander of Task Force Bio Bio, gunned down his superior, Col. Romeo Espra, while they were inside the Machine Gun Company headquarters at around 8:40 a.m. But Lt. Col. Franklin Del Prado, 602nd Infantry Brigade spokesperson, could not say how the alleged disappearance of what happened. Col Prado said Peralta did not resist or run after the shooting. "We are still investigating the incident. Based on reports we got, Peralta shot Espra while he was in a meeting in connection with something," Del Prado said. Peralta has been placed under the custody of the Eastmincom police station. *Jonathan Mallari, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Fish kill hits Bataan towns



BALANGA CITY—Two coastal towns in Bataan were hit by fish kill Wednesday, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) said. Lynda Dumi, Bataan BFAR chief, said the fishkill was in Barangay Lamao in Limay town and Alangan in Mariveles town. She attributed the decline in the oxygen level in the water prompted by a sudden change in weather conditions. The BFAR's also conducted tests for possible red tide toxin contamination. "Initial results showed that the water and the fish sampled were negative to red tide. There's nothing to worry about possible red tide contamination in Bataan," she said. *Greg Bituin Jr., PDI Central Luzon Desk*

2 arrested for child labor

BUSUANGA—Police operatives, in cooperation with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Labor and Employment (Dole) offices in Southern Tagalog, have arrested two suspects for employing children in their store. Police identified the suspects as Reginaldo Tolentino Del Castro, the owner and supervisor of the Dark-n-Lovely Beauty Supply Marketing Inc. Store located at 2nd Street, Barangay Mamplasan, Binan, Laguna Industrial Park, Laguna. Investigators disclosed that the children workers, who were employed by the suspects at the Primex Chemicals Co. Inc. are rescued by the DSWD-Region IV-A team headed by Ms. Rosalinda Baldoz. The suspects made their first complaints before the DSWD and the police. Authorities also arrested the suspects who are now facing separate labor charges in court. *Ricardo Flores, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

2 held for marijuana bricks

BAGUIO CITY—Police on Monday arrested two male held for possession of more than P600,000 worth of marijuana bricks. Supt. Emelio Fiesteras, chief of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency in this city, identified the suspects as Antonio Bagayo, 41, and Dominic Bagnotan, 33, both residents of Bokod, Benguet. Recovered from them were 10 kilograms of dried marijuana leaves formed into bricks and nine of marijuana resin or hashish. Fiesteras said the suspects were selling the marijuana bricks for a P5,000 agent, who posed as a buyer, for P600 a kilogram. Police intercepted the van driven by the confederate's take at P300,000 and of the hashish at P31,000. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Seminar for lawyers

A SEMINAR/Convention for legal practitioners is sponsoring a four-day lecture series aimed at initiating lawyers into continuing legal professionalism. The Legaldevelopment Lecture Series, organized by the Sophia Advanced Scholastic Solutions Inc. (SASSI) is scheduled Sept. 3, Nov. 3 and Nov. 17 at the Phil. Air Force Officers Mess and Country Club, Villamor Air Base. It will be held at Tierra Thermal, SASSI executive director, at 891-0621 or 892-41-58.

Church group worried over rights abuses in Samar

By Jerry A. Galarosa
PDI Visayas Bureau

CALBIGAN CITY—An international pastoral ecumenical group has expressed "concern" over the reported human rights violations allegedly perpetrated by the military in Eastern Visayas.

"We viewed an unexplained message of international concern by the authorities we have seen here," said Clarence John of the World Council of Churches (WCC), reading from a statement during a news conference on Saturday at the Hotel Alejandro here.

John, leader of the WCC team that called on the families of alleged victims of human rights violations, said the stand of the ecumenical church movement was that violence and war against the citizenry would only perpetuate more violence and would not resolve the conflict.

"We pray that the people's love will be alleviated through dialogue, not violence, that extrajudicial killings and interrogation, incursion and harassment will cease and that the people of Eastern Visayas will enjoy genuine freedom and peace, based on justice," said John, who is member of the WCC's human rights and legal desk.

A 10-member team of the Geneva-based WCC was in Samar from July 15 to 19 on the invitation by the National Council of Churches in the Philippines following the killing of Sen. Eduardo Lapiz of the United Churches of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) last May 12 in San Isidro town, Leyte.

The group talked to the families of the eight alleged victims of human rights violations and some leaders of human rights groups and of the UCCP in Eastern Samar.

They also talked to Major Ursicino Palparan, head of the 8th Infantry Division, in his office at Camp Lukban, Catbalogan town in Samar. The group described the meeting as "extremely cordial."

Bulacan officials welcomed the news on Monday by eating low cal (duck) and balut (fertilized duck eggs) to show that Bulacan is free from the bird flu virus. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Land cracks in Bohol town get wider, reach highway

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CLUE CITY—The soil movement in Inabanga, Bohol has worsened as the cracks have affected the national highway leading to the seaside town of Sierra Bullones, rendering it impassable to vehicles and isolating it.

Inabanga Mayor Ramon Llaves said passenger buses and jeepneys would not go to the towns of Sierra Bullones because of the cracks on the national highway that had reached about 600 to 700 meters wide.

He said some motorcycles for-hire (habal-habal) wanted to go through but the routes are only single lane that more so risk it.

As a result, he added, passengers from and other provinces had to take other routes in going to Sierra Bullones.

Some passed by Dauis town then to the southbound road in Barangay Mayana, Jagna town before proceeding to Sierra Bullones.

Others took the longer route passing through the coastal towns of Duero, Guindulman, Candijay and Alicia and then moved to Bilar town before reaching Sierra Bullones.

The cracks also ruptured three Clustal in Barangay Bilayana, Jagna town, which is along the affected national highway.

Llaves said 36 families in Sitio Bukhbuhan also in Mayana had to be evacuated last July 11 after their houses were destroyed when the landmass way.

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JDV promises federal state in Mindanao

BUVENECIA

BONGAO, Tawi-Tawi—Speaker Jose de Venecia vowed to push for the transformation of the autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) into a Federal State of Muslim Mindanao in a fresh major step by Congress to amend the Constitution.

De Venecia said the timetable for a shift to a unicameral federal parliamentary form of government from the current presidential system would start with a "historic debate on July 25," initially on the mode of amending the Charter, whether or not it would be "through a constituent assembly, con vent, or joint parliament by Constituent Assembly."

A Constituent Assembly convenes from the current presidential system would start with a "historic debate on July 25," initially on the mode of amending the Charter, whether or not it would be "through a constituent assembly, con vent, or joint parliament by Constituent Assembly."

"We want the politicians to understand the situation that Mindanao is now a very significant if they want Mindanao to be independent," Buvenecia said.

The MBC has been pushing for a federal form of government.

Buvenecia also said they would also support the creation of a separate government for Mindanao if this was done through a constitutional process.

"We must be very careful in such a way that we cannot be charged with secession," he said.

Ramon Llaves, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. (PCCIC) regional governor for southeastern Mindanao, said Mindanao political leaders pushing for an independent Mindanao should know that "the life of a republic is economy."

"You cannot create an independent Mindanao if you don't know where your economy is heading," he said.

The Elta People, Elta Mindanao, a group led by former transportation secretary Bernardo Abaya, has been rallying Mindanaoans to support the establishment of a separate government.

Abaya has been making the rounds of Mindanao and claimed his group has been gaining support from local government executives.

The Confederation of Provincial Governors, City Mayors and Municipal Mayors League, Presidents of Mindanao (Confed) has passed a resolution supporting Mr. Arroyo during a meeting on Tuesday here.

Confed said the Constitution must be upheld.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Pifol said that if a power grab occurs, they might consider supporting the establishment of an independent Mindanao. *Fuad Macalandag, Judy Quirco and Bryan Rosales, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ASK LIHIT
Adults have taken over Baguio City's only public playground as the town ass's only children and brings have become too dangerous for their charges.

₱12M monthly losses traced to power deal

By Philamena T. Virola
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

CITY OF CALAMBA—An official of the National Power Corp. (Napocor) said the government-owned power firm was forced to purchase more electricity because of Mirant Global Corp.'s failure to provide its share of the power supply.

At a recent Napocor area losing P1.2 million a month as a result, said Rukot Dyrecio, Napocor Batangas-Bondoc area manager.

In a public hearing held here on July 10, Dyrecio said that if power supply in Binakon was not provided by the Gina Pagsisi's contract ended in May 2006, millions of pesos would be lost. Napocor calculates how much need to Pole million per year, he said.

The provincial administrator of Ilocos cited a report of Calaca Adm. Gimarco president, that the province currently consumes 27 megawatts of electricity at peak load.

Frequent brownouts

Only 28 mW are provided by the Napocor through G.E. Energy Rental. This results in load shedding or rotation, giving rise to brownouts that usually take place during the peak period of 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Rental supplies only 2-3.5 mW or, one of its power plants is non-operational. It has a total capacity of 7.2 mW.

Dyrecio said Mirant had contracted a minimum energy offtake or guaranteed take on any provision of 50 million kilowatthours a year, which is equivalent to 40 percent of the province's power needs.

But, Binakon said, Mirant has installed only 20 percent of the generating capacity in the province.

A surprise representative, however, claimed that they were not generating the contracted 4.1 million mW a month because there's no need for that much power.

Mendoza claimed this, saying Mirant's bought and paid for only 60% Mirant delivered.

Plants cooled out

The problem has been Mirant plants' failure to operate reliably and consistently, he said.

Dyrecio wants to eliminate the punitive buyout provision in case of payment delinquency by Mirant, unfavorable changes in fuel or force majeure.

"You can file Mirant with P500 million in buyout penalty. We can load up Sting Ultim cost by Mirant," Mendoza said.

"We intended to threaten that Dyrecio wants it to stay as generator supplier but we must correct the one-sided contract and make their benchmark rate competitive for the long term."

Another power producer, Wesvar Inc. is talking to provide 20-30 mW but its contract with Dyrecio is being opposed by Mendoza, Binakon, the League of Municipalities and other provincial officials.

Mystery

Felipe Nonoy, Dyrecio assistant general manager, said he was excluded by the opposition to the Bowen Gas contract.

"I wonder who's behind this," he said, adding that Bowen firm's rate of P5.91 was 1.9 percent cheaper than Mirant's P6.30 of Calaca and Pililan Unit.

Rep. Teodolfo Valencia has come out in the open to oppose Bowen Gas. "It's a monopoly," he said.

Added what he thought about Bowen Gas' having lower rates than Mirant, Valencia said he did not know.

A powerful negotiation meeting between Ilocos and Mirant will be held tomorrow in Pangalusian, said Romeo Cossio, Ilocos finance manager.

Exec says park closure will kill marine animals

By Avelaro Joaquin
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—An official of the Ocean Adventure has said calls of environmentalists to close the marine park would mean "certain death" for marine animals left under the facility's care.

"Closing Ocean Adventure will not only terminate the marine animals there to extinct death but will deprive hundreds of thousands of Filipinos of the opportunity to truly appreciate the value of marine mammals as partners of humanity in the enormous task of saving our oceans," Gerardo Magdaraog, vice president for corporate affairs of the Ocean Adventure, said in a statement.

Earlier, the Earth Island Institute-Philippines and the Philippine Animal Welfare Society sought the closure of the marine park and called for help from the environment and health officials to ease the two remaining false killer whales (Pseudorca crassidens) in captivity at the marine park in Subic Bay. The whales, and some sea lions, are being used for amusement shows in the park.

The groups named the unit following the death of a female false killer whale in the park on July 5.

The Ocean Adventure is being operated by the Subic Bay Marine Exploration Inc. (SBMEI), in which Subic Bay Freeport.

Magdaraog said the death of the whale, named "Mesh," was "indeed a sad occasion."

"But it is ironic that the two organizations that proclaim their love and care for animals now want to close down a world-class facility that provides one of the best animal care services for animals, especially cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises) and other marine mammals," he said.

"With what, and how are they [groups] going to provide that care they're giving quite well in the closing care of animal care experts?" Magdaraog asked. "What whales have they saved already?"

Reds, the environmentalists said, was the third whale to die in captivity at the Ocean Adventure (Before it re-opened in 2001.

Coral (11 years old) died in January last year while Orson (19 years old) died in July 2005. The whales died of gastrointestinal illnesses.

SBMEI vice president Nicole Conrad said in the wild, false killer whales live up to 62 years. "Said confinement by Ocean Adventure will make sure that none of these animals will live to reach maturity."

But Magdaraog said that's bull. He did declare in saying that.

He said Mesh got her name because when she was rescued from the wild, a large fishing hook was lodged in her body. Personnel from the Ocean Adventure, Magdaraog said, surgically removed the metal and saved Mesh from death.

Indigenous names now recognized by gov't

By Ordwar Carino
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—With all communities in the Cordillera now set for census of it, but they can now have their children baptized with indigenous names without undergoing legal complications, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples said.

In fact, even practicum people had to undergo court hearings before they can now be officially registered, the NCIP said.

Lawyer Lefleur Marie Galindo, NCIP director for the Cordillera, said many tribes in the region have yet to avail themselves of the provisions of administrative Order No. 3 issued by the office of the civil registrar general on May 14 last year.

The order, Galindo said, embodies the rules governing new and revised spelling of indigenous people. It is the government's way of further protecting the cultural practices of tribal Filipinos, including native Cordilleras, she said.

She said it is a common practice among Cordilleras to have their recorded legal names, aside from their Christian names.

"There are those who only have one name and there are also those who adopt the Christian name of their father as their family name," she said. "Sometimes, this causes confusion..."

Galindo said many are even forced to spend money to go to court to have their names corrected because of inconsistencies or wrong entries on their birth certificates.

These problems are solved by AO No. 3, Galindo said, since tribal names can now be registered with the local civil registry.

Under the order, the following names are allowed for registration: a) any name, in English or Filipino, or a tribal name which is [that] first name such as middle name and surname; b) first name, middle name and last name; new but following Mal) relationships; c) first name, middle name and last name according to tribal relationships; and d) other names given in accordance with customs and laws.

Computer firm to sue Batangas gov for software theft

BATANGAS CITY—The owner of a computer firm here who accused Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez of stealing software from his firm is to be used by a newly formed computer firm the governor owns said he would sue the latter and the governor.

Manny Tabuada, chief executive officer of the Amellar Solutions Inc., said he was suing the governor for using his firm's software for the Automated Data Processing Technology (ADPT), a P.88 million project of the Batangas provincial government and which is allegedly owned by Sanchez himself.

"We have also filed copyright infringement and unfair competition cases against him (Sanchez)," Tabuada said.

"It seems the ADPT had already contracted the project even before it was bid out, which confirms my earlier suspicion," said Tabuada.

"I suspect that wasn't even formed but could not decompile the kind of software that it was intending to sell to the province. Practically, all employees of ADPT were former Amellar employees, including the drivers," Tabuada said.

According to Tabuada, Amellar's former business development officer Ivan Ignacio de Mesa, who was handling the province's account, is now ADPT's chief executive officer.

"We were caught by surprise last August, when we were suddenly flooded with complaints and disappearances and absences without leave, only to find out that they had joined ADPT, a company supposedly organized by Governor Sanchez and 16 others," Tabuada said.

He said his lawyers had prepared the criminal cases to be filed against Sanchez and company.

"This is independent from the

Group opposes Visayan Sea fishing ban

BACOLOD CITY—Fishing groups are opposing the proposed ban on commercial fishing in the Visayan Sea to allow the rejuvenation of marine life there.

In a position paper sent to Regine Occidental's love Joseph Montesclaros, the Alliance of Philippine Fishing Federations Inc. (APFFI) asked that it instead be considered as a marine sanctuary where the area was not overfished.

"Through its president, Alonzo Tac, the group said it was the Gingol fishing method that blocked the migratory path of some fish species from travelling to the Visayan Sea from the Sulu Sea to mature.

Gingol is a stationary fishing method that uses mosquito nets to catch shrimp.

But the gingol, they said, should be stopped because it does not just catch shrimp but also other species of fish.

Montesclaros said the proposed ban was still subject to scientifically and technical evaluation by the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources.

It would also undergo public consultations during which the APFFI could contribute its concerns, he added.

The Visayan Sea, an area of about 2 million hectares, is the heart of the Indo-Malayan Marine Triangle bounded by the Philippines, Indonesia and Malaysia. It is considered the richest marine ecosystem in the world.

The body of water covers the provinces of Iloilo, Cebu and Negros Occidental in the Visayas, and Masbate. It was once so rich that it was dubbed the "Alaska of the Philippines" because it contributed as much as 60% of fish and crab stocks that fed of the entire Caribbean Sea.

But destructive fishing methods, like blast and cyanide fish-

ing, and over-fishing have reduced that rich fishing area, depleting 95 percent of marine life and 90 percent of coral.

Montesclaros said the call for a temporary ban might be a radical proposal that could bring short-term hardships to fishermen in the area.

But such a call, he added, was considered to ensure food security and sustainability of resources for future generations.

"It is a preventionary approach, which will entail short-term sacrifices for long-term gains," the governor said.

He cited statistics that pointed to a decreasing volume of marine catch in the Visayan Sea, which could be directly linked to overfishing and destruction of fish habitats. Carlo Evasco, PDI Visayas Bureau

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Archers still in great shape, assures coach Pumaren

By Jasmine W. Payo

LA SALLE coach Franz Pumaren offered reassurance, rather than excuses, after the defending champions lost back-to-back eliminations for the first time in the UAAP basketball tournament.

"We're still in great shape," said Pumaren. "There's nothing to worry about. There's the mauling of the team, and our confidence level is still there."

Although Pumaren acknowledged the Archers' first letdown about his preseason, he insisted that the archers dropped their matches in narrow margins.

"Remember, our two games were very close," Pumaren pointed out. "It was the breaks of the game."

The archers fell by five points against the University of the Philippines Maroons, 61-56, and by the slimmest of margins against his younger brother Rodel's University of the East Warriors, 57-56.

"We just have to overcome this right now," said Pumaren. "It's a minor bump. After this, we have to start adjusting. It's a test of our character."

The Archers entered at still 6-2 in the season opener—a 78-68 hammering of rival Ateneo Eagles. The dominating performance, though, seemingly sapped their energies as the archers then proceeds to their next two games—67-8 percent against the Maroons and 229-1 percent versus the Warriors.

Joseph Yeo, La Salle's top scoring option, repelled the team's struggles saying he went 2-of-14 on the floor against the Maroons.

"He's doing extra shooting," said Pumaren of his team captain. "There's that point in your career when you struggle. He has to accept this challenge."

Pumaren expects all the other squads to go for undefeated stainer over the Archers.

"Every time other teams play against us, since we're the defending champs, they're playing out their A games," said Pumaren.

"So I've been stressing that we have to start really competitive. It has to be a collective effort. The basketball fan, we have to rise above this challenge."

Stags survive ejection of Turo, chief gunner

By Jasmine W. Payo

SAN SEBASTIAN wondered the ejection of coach Tito Veloresoso and main man Leo Najorda to expel University of Perpetual Help, 78-75, in overtime yesterday in the NCAA basketball tournament at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Najorda was slapped a disqualifying foul for a wayward elbow while Veloresoso was thrown out for excessive complaining with 1:30 left in the third period and with the Stags playing catch-up to the last encroaching Altas.

But for short-spurts-only-behind a few in the Stags as they came charging back from 19 points down to ninth deep third stanza as one.

The Stags worked behind Red Vi-ray's 16 points, Jeff Viernes' nifty and leaned on the senior swingman's seven points in the extra period, including the game-clinching three-point play in the final 17.8 seconds.

Montes, who came away with a game-high 20 points, converted a pair of bonuses by holding Perpetual's final play with a steal off Vladimir Joe.

"There was pressure when we lost our fourth [Veloresoso]," said assistant coach Bonnie Mercado. "But my message to my players is: hold on and listen to coach."

Earlier, Alex Angeles and Jovenor Jimenez combined for 44 points as the San Beda Lions whipped the hapless Jose Rizal U Bombers, 77-44, for their first triple-digit outings.

The Stags landed it 23-10 before Viernes sparked his team's offense to take the lead at 29-30.

Francis de Leon, who scored all of his seven points in the fourth quarter, keyed a 12-0 run as the Stags increased their lead, 53-35.

Turning to their second strategem, the Stags kept their momentum and a Viernes triple finally gave them a 62-59 edge.

The Stags seemed headed for the win, 66-61, when Perpetual's Bonjo and Bullen stabbed a triple at the buzzer to force the extra period.

The stats:

Jovenor Jimenez (44)

Alex Angeles (19)—Angeles 19; Jimenez 11; Ilgenfritz 6; Alfonso 5; Alcantara 4; Cruz 3; Bonleon 2; Gonzales 2; Arenas 2; Tolentino 2; Ramos 1; Alfonso 1; Arenas 1; Tolentino 1; Ramos 1.

Jose Rizal—Jimenez 14; Jones 10; Sese 6; Fernando 5; Nuval 5; Arigo 2; Santiago 2; Cantuneros 2; Sala 2; Bagsic; Ramirez 2.

Quarters: 23-6; 40-14; 55-29; 77-44

Viernes 16—Viernes 15; Vray 1; De Leon 1; Bagsic 6; Apale 6; Malgado 5; Santos 3; Cosanes 2; Aldemero 2; Asi 1.

Perpetual—Dalisay 19; Bino 17; Bacani 12; Joe 12; Pelaez 6; Apat 5; Montes 5; Gamayo 5; Ramos 5; Bagsic 2.

Quarters: 17-10; 27-28; 44-44; 66-66; 78-75 (OT).

BALE! Mandaue lady of the University of Perpetual Help Altas smothers a drive by Frasa San Delgado (3) of the San Sebastian Stags.

Woods takes British Open . . .

Photocopyright AFP

after driving into a greenside pot bunker.

The glaring gracious Jose Maria Olazabal of Spain edged Scot Colin Montgomerie had been his closest challengers but both fell away soon afterwards.

Twice US Masters champion Olazabal dropped shots on 12, 13, 15, and 17 but finished the last on his way to a 71, safely ahead Montgomerie's challenge ended with bogeys on 11, 13 and 16.

Now, it's not a question any more of whether or not Woods will surpass Nicklaus, the only question remaining is when?

"It's got to 15 already this week in my career. It's very exciting to hopefully look forward to some good years in my 30s and hopefully into my 40s," said Woods.

Woods is on his ahead of the rest in the world rankings it is almost frightening.

After Singh scorched him to the rankings at the end of last year, the victory re-established Woods (14.34) comfortably at the top of the pecking order, over but points clear of the Fijian (12.19) and nearly seven ahead of Els (9.26).

That a his biggest advantage since mid-March 2004 but he is quoted suggestions that the ladies's top class rival to keep his game and his temperament finely honed.

The world's top golfers paid tribute to Woods.

"You're playing against the best player in the world and when he strikes the ball in the air it is really great. Just watching," said compatriot Paul Casey. Golfer after a final-round 66 and finishing tied for third place with Spain's Jose Maria Olazabal at 281, five behind the American.

"He's setting the bar so high, he's so strong and he's just so great player."

Olazabal had the best view of Woods as his partner for the in the final round.

"I don't think it's impossible to consider Tiger for five [or more in majors]," said Olazabal.

The 92-year-old Scot returned a 72 to secure second place at sister under, his best Open finish in 16 starts but only his second top 10.

El Open winner Michael Campbell carded a 72 to finish on a seven-stop share of fourth at under, level with world No. 2 Singh (72). Spaniard Sergio Garcia (73) and double US Open champion Retief Goosen (74). AFP

Japanese expat, teener clinch triathlon honors

JAPANESE expatriate Hitoshi Tabei and teenager Kim Mangubang shared overall honors in the 2nd leg of the Speedo-Activeal Age Group Triathlon series held at the Clearwater Country Club inside the Clark Special Economic Zone in Mariveles last Sunday.

The 52-year-old Tabei took first honors in the men's side with a time of 1:04.17 over the 750m swim-20K bike-5K run event. He also bagged the 50-54 age group title.

The 13-year-old Mangubang of Concentrix College in Laguna tabed the women's event, outwalking Angelo Alon-ador in the second heat of the 5K run en route to a 1:21.12 clocking.

Tabei, a former swimming coach in Daiwa Securities who is in a Laguna-based logistics company, took the lead at the halfway mark of the final 5K run.

"I expected to win because I have been training hard in preparation for a half Ironman distance or close to Ironman," said Tabei, who joined his first race this year.

"The big surprise of course how close that triathlon is getting more and more popular," said Triathlon Association of the Philippines head Tom Carrasco Jr., who graced the awarding ceremony together with race organizer Melvin Tuazon, Clearwater GM Richard Hallowell and Speedo's Erna Bueser.

The year's edition was supported by Powerline, Asian Center for Insulation, Adidas Middle Pinpoint, Bench, Salon and Spa and Mosquito-B Terminator.

TRIATHLON mainstayer Michelle Mi Tarriel, gets ready for the bike leg. She finished second in the 20-29 category of the event held at the Clearwater Country Club in Clark.

SPORTSWATCH

Santos sets new RP pole vault record

MIKE Santos of Samar set a new Philippine record in raising the pole vault mark in the Hong Kong Inter-city Athletics Challenge recently. Santos' 5.35-meter vault smashed the old RP record of 5.30 held by national team mainstay Mercedes Nuevo. Santos and teammate Delphine Jacobino were awarded berth and ranking in the tournament but surprised the host with their impressive showings. The two were part of the delegation led by Philippine's Office of Sports Development, the Games de Manila University, Philippine Sports and the Samar and Track and Field Alumni. Jacobino settled for fourth place in the event where three contenders from Hong Kong, another from China and Australia's Kate Dennis took the top three. Chinese Taipei's Yuan Yi was sixth.

Filipinos bow to Lebanese in Davis Cup

JOHNNY Arcilla dropped a 6-7, 7-5 (5), 8-3 decision to Lebanese No. 2 Rami Ahgha in the Philippines 2nd Davis Cup Asia/Oceania Group II tie with Lebanon, 2-3, at the Golf Club of Lebanon clay courts in Beirut. Arcilla's defeat doomed a full roster for the Filipinos' hopes of advancing to the next round after Aden Patrick Clavo pulled the Philippines to a tie at two. Sunday with a come-from-behind 6-7 (5), 6-7 (8), 6-3, 6-4, 7-5 victory over Patrick Chucri in the first reverse singles. The Lebanese battled a 7-5 edge after the pivotal doubles on Saturday when Chucri and Ahgha outlasted the veteran tandem of Arcilla and Jeson Patrombon, 7-6, 6-2, 2-6, 6-3, 9-7, in the tightly fought duel's second offense-free outing. The two teammates split the first two singles on Friday with Clavo whipping Ahgha, 6-2, 6-2, 6-2, and Arcilla dropping a 7-5 win in the opening duel, 6-4, 2-6, 2-6, 6-3, 9-7.

RP booters power Kaya's title romp

AZKAL as all Filipino team powered by several national players, celebrated Union of Germany's 1-0 win over the weekend to capture the inaugural Cup of Northern Asia Association Football Federation (NAAFF) title. Led by veterans Dale Lazaro and Ali Bumotoan, Kaya dominated the 10-team international tournament finishing top of a group that included Filipinos American and Asian players by ending eight wins against one loss and a draw in the single round robin elimination. Kaya's team composition was a mixture of Filipinos and Filipino-Americans with Lazaro, Bumotoan, Jason Hernandez, Jerry Lucena, Ed Rubio, Neil Daly, S.C. de Jesus and Jeff Ramos. Coach Eduardo Sahid is credited for the team's success after he was given a chance to manage the team. Sahid is a former RP national player who was a mainstay in the Philippine Air Force team.

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METRO

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Text or your feedback:

MAKATI pr work. Makati students paint city sidewalks with all colors of the rainbow, producing vibrant murals and amusement-inspired paintings. INQUIRER/RYAN

Art beneath your feet

By Tarra V. Quismundo

MAKATI City's students and residents have caused a stretch of Makati's concrete sidewalk into a canvas for artwork promoting environmental awareness.

For the city's Clean River Painting festivity, participants from 55 barangays and some public schools got to paint on white-painted rectangular enclosures of the sidewalk on Singian Street near the PASAY CITY Hall.

"We want the participants to show through artistic expression, how they could help improve their environment," said Danilo Dias, chief of the Makati Department of Environment Services (DES), the agency that organized the activity.

Armed with paintbrushes and using epoxy paint, participants filled their allotted spaces with various, mural-themed paintings within the day. The sidewalk instantly came alive with bright colors of green, yellow, blue and red, featuring images from the ocean's to the familiar.

"With these paintings, we could help people realize how important our environment is. Like us, I like animals, and I believe that if we don't take care of our natural, animals won't have a place to live, and people who make a living from them would have no source of income, we will have an source of food," said 11-year-old Dhanian Bautista from the Guadalupe Viejo Elementary School.

As she transformed her "canvas," Bautista said she had grown fond of drawing images relating to the environment since painting became a hobby when she was five.

"It's so much fun because it's nice to look at, it's delightful to the eyes," said the sixth grader.

One of her environment-inspired creations was featuring in an earlier on-the-spot art competition in Manila's commercial district Ayala Triangle.

The DES activity was originally planned as part of the Environment Month in June. It was postponed three times because of bad weather.

Another sidewalk-painting activity on the parallel street of Edsa was also planned, said Dias, "tomorrow's activity was held with the help of private firms and environmental groups.

"We want to broaden the area surrounding City Hall. Not just the buildings, but also the sidewalks," said Millan, whose office previously held arts-in- and wall-painting activities in other parts of Makati.

Pullout of Erap cards causes queue, unleashes fiery tempers

By Clarissa S. Batino

MALACAÑANG's decision last week to pull out cards bearing the signatures of former President Joseph Estrada being used was unpopular to the Metro Rail Transit Upstream to be a nightmare for its operators as well as commuters.

A shortage of electronic cards led to long queues in LRT sta-

tions since Friday spawning passengers who complained about missing their appointments yesterday.

At Taft Ave., tempers flared among railway passengers who lined up in seemingly never-ending queues.

Yesterday morning, commuters said lines at major stops like North Edsa were all the way to the

south Pinaclab.

The agents also found 107.2 g of alleged marijuana from Amandilab's bedroom and P1 million worth of unused medicines, including counterfeit and adulterated.

Amandilab denied the NBI's accusations, saying he was harassed and framed by the agents.

Marine victim of foul play?

By Jocelyn R. Uy

WHAT IT suicide or murder?

This the question the Taguig City police is trying to answer in connection with the death of a marine officer found dead earlier this week in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City before noon on Sunday.

Apart from the lack of evidence pointing to a suicide, Philippine Marines Master Sgt. Rodolfo Julio, 42, maintained no gunshot wounds, raising suspicion of foul play, SPO1 Edmundo Cabiles said yesterday in a phone interview.

Technical Sgt. Edwin Jacinto said a civilian employee, Rosalie Juan, found the body at 11:15 Marine Battalion Barracks where they found powder at 11:15 a.m. Sunday, Cabiles said.

Admitting was also assigned to the same barracks, the policeman added.

"When they went inside, they found Adviser sprawled on the floor beside his bed," he said.

Cabiles said Adviser's commander alleged that Master sustained wounds but that the policeman said there was no suicide note.

The marine did not show signs of depression or problems, according to his friends.

It was impossible for him to shoot himself twice on the same spot using a .45-cal. pistol," Cabiles said.

He added that if Adviser had time, the second shot would have hit a different part of his body.

"But usually, when one decides himself with that kind of gun, he can no longer fire another shot," the policeman said.

Adviser, who was scheduled to enter his own room brought to the Manila Naval Hospital where he was declared him dead on arrival at 12:15 p.m.

Foreigner nabbed for illegal drugs

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A FREEMAN was arrested in his Batangas City home last week for possessing a large quantity of prohibited drugs, including Viagra and marijuana.

Saul Amsterdam, 56, of Rt. 61, C.M. Recto St., Sawe Circle, was caught during a raid conducted by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Special Task Force and Bureau, Arson and Investigation Division.

A total of 760 tablets of 5 mg Valium or diazepam were seized by NBI agents from the suspect. The tablets were reportedly

Tiangco named PMP spokesperson

By Nancy C. Carvajal

AS IF the job of former Rep. Elpidio Ibñegurin were not enough to explain the Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino's stand on current issues, deposed President Joseph Estrada's son-in-law and Imus Mayor Homer Saluta Tiangco as party spokesperson for Metro Manila.

Estrada, president of the PMP party, signed Tiangco's appointment last July 8, according to a statement sent to the Inquirer.

Tiangco is authorized to perform all duties and exercise all authorities appurtenant to the appointment," Estrada said.

One of the Tiangco's duties is to coordinate with the national spokesperson, former Rep. Elpidio Ibñegurin, and the national directorate of the party.

But according to another opposition leader, Tiangco's new assignment to party spokesperson was meant to unseat the head of the PMP.

"We want to let the people know that we also have dynamic and young leaders in the PMP apart from the Estrada brothers," the opposition leader said.

The opposition leader was referring to Estrada sons Jose, Jinggoy Estrada and Jose Jean Marie Ejercito.

"I don't really know why I was chosen. All I know now I have to coordinate with former congressman Ibñegurin," Tiangco said in a phone interview.

In his statement, he said that he considered the appointment as honor. "I feel that in these politically critical times, it is crucial that the public is made aware of where the PMP stands," he said.

Tiangco also clarified that here the spokesperson of the PMP, not the United Opposition or UNO. He that he would be getting his instructions directly from the former president, and from the directorate of the party, including Ibñegurin.

But the statement said he hopes his assignment would strengthen the PMP and that he would be able to convey the party's sentiments effectively, particularly to its members in the provinces.

"We are now in the process of conducting meetings for unity in the entire Metro Manila. The party needs all the help it can get to attain those objectives," Tiangco concluded.

How GMA can win back people's trust

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has less a quarter-to-any-offshore Cabinet member in the person of Ibñegurin Adolfo Jr.

While resigning as the chief of the Presidential Management Staff (PMS) suffered any bodies even before the "them 10" officials were out with a bang.

For instance, Tiyong Adolfo drew he-wee-wee of the technical secretary of then Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile. It is at his discretion to work hard and/or to study and therefore, quit quietly.

The rumor mills in the media got that a phone among top Malacañang officials to be true upon by the lowdown for "unsolicited" presentation of a communications plan by Marie Imperio.

Imperio, GMA's classmate at the Assumption College, was a member of the President's "famine" Cabinet and is now an officer at the Asian Development Bank.

Imperio's plan was to restore GMA's image from that of a corrupt, incompetent politician to a sagacious, able Chief Executive.

Because of the closeness to the President, Imperio became known like ordered all Cabinet members to talk to the media about the President's unscripted conversations with at elected officials.

Imperio wanted more complaints with her communications plan, without consulting Adolfo. This ticked the self-effacing Adolfo because the President's hopeless drama are not inspiring at its best.

If the President wants to be rich, a member of her official family to remain hyperactive, she should ban Imperio from interviewing anyone; she no longer holds office at the Palace.

Jimenez's plan to transform GMA's image from that of a crass (unfortunate) that of a multi-talented, multi-appreciable leader is bringing down the cost of medicines by 50 percent, even 75 percent of their price in drugstore counters. A cartel of multinational pharmaceutical drug companies, allegedly in cahoots with a drugstore chain, has picked up the prices of medicines.

Here does the government bring down the prices of basic medicines, like those for stroke, tuberculosis, hypertension, diabetes and infections?

Simple. After small pharmaceutical firms to import raw materials from India and other countries where medicines are cheap. Give these companies access to loans from banks like the Development Bank of the Philippines.

The common many poor patients are dying so many parts of the country is that they can't afford to buy basic medicines prescribed to them by doctors.

Government should flood its hospitals with basic medicines so poor patients can be given those lifesaving drugs.

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San Juan left out in the cold

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE CHAIR of the administration party Lakas-National Union of Christian Democrats (NUCD) in San Juan town has reason to blow his top.

On Sunday, several of his supporters came to him complaining that some of them were shortchanged of the cash due them for attending the pro-administration rally at the Luneta Park on Saturday. Worse, they appeared to be asking him to pay the balance of the money they were promised.

"They told me they were promised P300, but they didn't get it. Not all got the amount. Some were given only P100 and P150," said Erick San Juan, chair of the Lakas-NUCD in San Juan. "It was terrible."

Some were told they would get P500, and got only half of it, he added.

"*Hakot talaga* (They were really bussed to Luneta)," he told the INQUIRER. "They also seemed to have the idea that I was supposed to give them the balance."

But what angered him was that he was not even at the rally site. "I wasn't invited," he said.

San Juan ran under Lakas but lost to Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito in 2004.

San Juan quoted one of those who went to the rally as saying it was a consultant of House Speaker Jose de Venecia who organized the "*hakot* crowd."

"I don't know why he would not tell me," he said, referring to the consultant. "I don't think it's the money. He's rich."

According to San Juan, the "protesters" from his town had brought a huge banner with the words "Lakas-NUCD San Juan" to the Luneta.

'No advice'

"I'm the Lakas chair in town and they did not even tell me about it. I learned that my party mates were there when one of my men texted me. He was looking for me and thought I knew about our participation in the rally all along," he said.

"All I want is respect," he said, arguing that, after all, he still receives regular letters from the Lakas. In fact, the local Commission on Elections had invited him to attend a meeting as the representative of the administration party in town. None of the Lakas candidates who ran under him were also invited to the rally, he claimed.

San Juan said around 60 people from at least two barangays in his town, an Estrada bailiwick, were ferried to Manila. He said a barangay chair in Manila had told him that each "team leader" was paid P5,000 to produce warm bodies from his area to be bussed to Luneta.

He wouldn't have minded and would even have supported a party call to bring supporters to Luneta. He, too, wanted his town mates to "earn something," he said.

A radio commentator and book author, San Juan spent his savings to run against Estrada last year. Told that he was courting the ire of his party mates by coming out with his allegations in public, he said: "I don't mind if they get angry. I'm just telling the truth."

Robbers terrorize bus passengers

By DJ Yap

A HIGHWAY robbery along the North Luzon Expressway on Sunday left bus passengers terror-stricken when grenade-wielding men threatened to blow up the bus.

For an hour, some 40 passengers of a Bataan Transit bus watched in silence as six men, brandishing handguns and grenades, took their belongings. The passengers were told that a grenade would be set off if they resisted.

The robbers posed as passengers on the Pasay City-bound bus and declared a hold-up at about 12:30 p.m. just before reaching the San Fernando Exit tollgate.

They apparently knew that one of the passengers, Rommel Arriola, was a policeman in civilian clothes, and aimed their guns at him as they took his firearm, badge and bag.

Three of the suspects got off later at Balintawak, Quezon City, while the rest alighted at the Muñoz market.

TUESDAY, JULY 19, 2005 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B1

WHAT'S INSIDE

Breaktime: Man's key business B2
Firms to bid for Napocor plants B5

BUSINESS

Editor: Raul D. Morales
Assistant Editor: Connie S. Martinez

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T-bill rates slide; 91-day yield at 5.452%

Calm on the political front encourages banks

By Michelle V. Remo

THE THREAT of a high interest rate regime eased yesterday as banks swamped the government's weekly auction of treasury bills, sending the benchmark 91-day rate plummeting by 72.1 basis points to 5.452 percent.

Traders said concerns arising from the political crisis hounding the Arroyo presidency were overtaken by optimistic hints the government's latest fiscal data.

The 91-day treasury bill rate had been on an upward slide over the past few weeks, where calls for President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down mounted due to allegations that she cheated in last year's elections and that her family received kickbacks from the illegal numbers game jueteng.

The 182-day treasury bill rate fell by 13.9 basis points to 7.401 percent as banks also bidded up generously on the six month debt paper. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

The yield of the 364-day debt instrument inched up by 43.1 basis points to 8.863 percent, but the bidding of Treasury said the increase was a natural result of the three successive weeks of failed auctions. Yesterday was the first time the Treasury accepted bids for the one-year debt since June 14.

"Certainly the market has signaled to lenders to get back to the spirited and aggressive mode. It's the final position that previous of their positive outlook," Nomad Treasury Head Cruz said in a briefing after the auction.

The country's investors credit on the national government's budget position, which registered a surplus of P246 million in June. It was the second after the P13.3 billion surplus recorded in April.

Cruz added that banks remained unsafe with cash despite the recent decision of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to raise their reserve requirements.

All maturities were oversubscribed, with the 91-day bills attracting P13.05 billion worth of bids. The 182- and 364-day bills got P7.64 billion and P5.74 billion, respectively. The government offers only P5 billion for each maturity a week.

Due to the unusually huge volume of bids for the 91-day bills, the Treasury's auction committee decided to accept P3.8 billion worth of bids, or more than the government's original bids offering.

Cruz also attributed the encouraging auction results yesterday to the market perception that the Supreme Court would soon lift the temporary restraining order on the expanded value-added tax law.

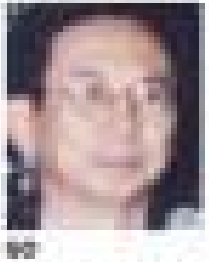
The bill law, considered the cornerstone of the administration's agenda to fix its tax fiscal problem, was suspended by the high court following petitions filed by opposition lawmakers and petroleum dealers.

SSS-led bloc eyes control of EPCIB

By Gerry C. Dumlao

A CORPORATE coup d'etat looms at the annual stockholders' meeting of Equitable PCI Bank today as key shareholders led by the state-owned pension funds and the Ayala-affiliate family bank are allowed to wrestle majority board control from the Go family.

Ace prosecutor yesterday (the Social Security System, the Government Service Insurance System and the Honorables family's Bank Middle East Philippine Equities Inc. (EMEI) accounted their deep bank-owned voting rights equivalent to 34.6 percent the bank and would therefore command majority control of the bank's 15-member board.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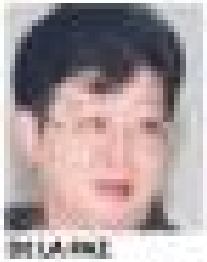
DE LA PAZ

GARCIA

ST

Go family's boardroom mettle put to supreme test

By David L. Lazo

(Second in a series)

PCIB is group that owns only one branch of a woman

has had seven their critics thinking that heads to grudging admiration.

"The key to all this is the bank's president secretary and Reynaldo Valencia, Equitable PCI director. He seems to explain why

Man's key business

are democracy after martial rule?
out Well, as every Filipino knows, it is
of the banking system.

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

While everybody else in business is having a hard time, such as during an economic recession, banks always make money.

Okay, not all of them just make money. Actually, many of them make oodles and oodles of money!

That's why I am a bit puzzled by the investment of the SSS and the GSIS in this bank called Equitable PCI Bank, in an alleged "joint venture" with the Go family who, as minority stockholders, simply control the bank for our two pension funds.

As members of the SSS and the GSIS, we, the people, actually invested P16 billion of our hard-earned money in the bank. As the price of its shares in the stock market shows today, the investment has been reduced by only about half.

* * *

AND yet the Go family thinks that I, as a newsman who has been writing about their modus operandi, am to blame for the mess in Equitable PCI.

With the help of an expensive yet crude PR program, they even put out newspaper ads, obviously attempting to turn the table on newsmen like me.

Hey, I did not use P16 billion of the money of the bank!

I also did not enter into a supposed "joint venture" with the SSS and the GSIS, in which I did not put in a single cross-eyed centavo, and then hid everything in some accounting magic!

Finally, I did not keep P6.5 billion worth of "treasury shares" in the bank, and then use them to elect "independent directors" to the board, who helped me control the bank, whose shares are not doing well in the stock market!

I definitely did not have anything to do with those. The last time I checked, only the Go family did, OKAY!

* * *

OF COURSE I can understand that the Go family somehow, must defuse the bomb hurled against them by government representatives on the Equitable PCI board.

The government is trying to wrest control of the board from the family, hoping to turn around the bank in the process, and thus at least get our money back.

That's why the Go family spent a lot of money—probably theirs and not the bank's, but you can never be sure—to put out the newspaper ads.

And they talked about .... well, a "merger."

That's the merger between the Equitable Bank, owned by the Go family, and PCI Bank, which they acquired in the suspected "joint venture" with the SSS and the GSIS.

Of course not many people understood what they talked about in the ads.

But they apparently think that everything they did in Equitable PCI was first-class business practice, because, one, each of the two banks had its own board, and, two, both boards approved the merger.

Let me see if I got it right: The Go family wanted to tell everybody that newsmen like me, before we can even think of writing about any foolishness in some investments, particularly those involving the retirement, disability and death benefit funds of millions of SSS and GSIS members, we should first check if the company actually has a board, and if the board actually approved the foolishness. Is that it?

* * *

WHO gives a hoot if all the popes, both living and dead, themselves approved the merger? The facts remain:

- One, the Go family did not put in a single centavo in their assumed joint venture with the SSS and GSIS to buy PCIBank.
- Also, they used the money of the merged bank, Equitable PCI, amounting to P16 billion, to come up with their share of the P32 billion joint-venture cash-out.
- And finally, when they could not repay the bank, they simply used some accounting magic, called "treasury shares" and "retirement of shares," apparently with board approval.

Nobody can deny that, in the deal of the Go family and the two pension funds to acquire PCIBank, somebody got P32 billion as payment.

That was cash, okay? It was not an IOU or something called swap. It was hard solid CASH into somebody's pocket! Just like that!

And some P16 billion of it came directly from the SSS and GSIS, which used our retirement, disability and death benefit funds.

Where did the other half of P16 billion come from?

Definitely it did not come from the Go family. They simply used the money of the banks, both Equitable and PCI, which they themselves said was even approved by the boards of the banks.

That's why everything was first-class business practice, based on our interpretation of the gobbledygook in the Go family newspaper ads.

* * *

OUR SOURCES inside Equitable PCI insist that P6.7 billion of the Go family share in the P32-billion cash payment for PCIBank actually came from Equitable.

The insiders also insist that the remaining P9.5 billion came from PCIBank, which had some fat deposit accounts, possibly in dollars.

And how did the Go family hide everything in the books of the merged Equitable PCI? Well, the

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SHIC'S NEW DIRECTORS

Former Energy Secretary Vince Perez (standing, right) and Former Trade Undersecretary Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr. (standing, left) join the father-and-daughter team of Henry and Teresita Sy-as the board of SM Investments Corp. Perez and Ortiz-Luis were elected independent directors of the company in its first annual stockholders meeting held recently. ALEX ESTRELLA

FEE-BASED BUSINESSES

Metrobank profit up 30%

By Dodo C. Dantino

METROPOLITAN Bank and Trust Co., the country's biggest bank, posted a first-semester net income of P2.28 billion, 30 percent higher than last year's level.

The bank's performance was boosted by rising non-interest and interest earnings.

In a statement, Metrobank president Antonio Abacan Jr. said the bank's non-interest earnings—or those generated from fee-based businesses—rose by 22 percent while net interest income grew by 4 percent.

"The gains were also attributed to reduced operating expenses, which were down by 1.8 percent as of June 30, 2005," he added.

Abacan said the first semester bottomline was rendered deeper in retained provisions during the period amounting to P1.66 billion.

Metrobank's total resources increased to P472.8 billion from P462.8 billion as of last year-end and this year reflecting an improvement of 10.6 (a) basis 2.2 percent.

Abacan said loans and deposits rose by 5.7 percent and 4.8 percent, respectively, from year-ago levels.

Capital funds stood at P52.7 billion as of June this year, up by 1.2 percent from P52 billion the year before. The amount was net of the P1.6 billion to cash dividends paid by Metrobank during the period.

In the meantime, Metrobank senior vice president for specialized accounts management group, Cesar Lagdameo said the bank would auction off P1.2 billion worth of non-performing loans (NPLs) on July 20, 2005.

"This is part of Metrobank's initiatives to trim down its NPL portfolio and to pave the way for further drops in disposing non-performing assets to improve the quality of the bank's loan portfolio," said Lagdameo. He added that five foreign investors were expected to participate in the bidding.

The bank vowed to continue focusing on improving its profit margin despite the lingering political jitters.

"While tightening overtime, banks in the country continue to do business as usual for the benefit of our depositors, shareholders and the industry," said Abacan.

"The banking industry is hopeful that our country's problems will be resolved soon," he added.

SSS-led bloc eyes . . .

Turn to page B2

"With or without proxies, we therefore have sufficient majority of EPCIB. We are now the majority group," said 'BMIC's and bank rescue chair Benito Bautista, who read the group's statement.

The group plans to vote 30.6 million shares representing combined stock and proxies, of which 147.85 million shares are owned by the SSS, 64.46 million shares by the GSIS, 51.61 million shares by PMIC and 25.16 million proxies from corporation's minority shareholders that include the group of mall magnate Henry Sy.

The three-way alliance would reorganize EPCIBank's six-member board and remove the incumbent chair, Antonio Go, according to Bautista. But he assured that the planned changes would affect only the board composition and that the new majority owners contemplate no change in management control.

"The majority group assures the independent shareholders and the public in general, especially the depositors of EPCIBank, that the majority group has redoubled all moves possible for an amicable settlement with the minority group continuing to this date," Bautista added.

He said the group had likewise explored all legal remedies and had in fact obtained favorable rulings from the Securities and Exchange, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the courts.

Yesterday, for instance, a temporary restraint order (TRO) was handed by the Makati Regional Trial Court against the Go family's voting of a disputed 81.6-percent stake in the bank to stall any move to postpone the shareholders' meeting.

"In all attempts for an amicable settlement have failed, the majority group is now constrained as its last recourse and only redress to take appropriate legal measures to protect, to serve and promote the best interest of EPCIBank, its shareholders, officers, employees and mostly its depositors," he said.

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Ferrari 4000
The World's First Carbon-Fiber Notebook from Acer

Acer, the leading notebook brand in Europe, Middle East and Africa, and the official supplier to Scuderia Ferrari recently unveiled the first notebook in the market with carbon fiber casing: the Ferrari 4000.

The Ferrari 4000 harnesses the cutting-edge technology pioneered and perfected in the world of Formula One and the aerospace industry. The advanced carbon-fiber casing of the Ferrari 4000 houses the latest AMD 64-bit technology, giving the notebook all the performance and elegance gained from the alliance between two companies renowned for pushing the boundaries of technology.

The Ferrari 4000 is based on the latest **AMD Turion™ 64 Mobile Technology** for slim and light notebooks. Its 64-bit architecture delivers leading-edge power and provides a raise of the performance gains promised by 64-bit applications. In addition, the AMD PowerNow!™ technology passes quiet battery life while HyperTransport™ technology virtually removes overall performance.

The elegant, thin and light carbon fiber casing, which comes in black and red Scuderia Ferrari red, offers the very latest technologies aimed at mobile users. Features include a large luminous 15.4" WXGA (1280 widescreen display supported by the ultra-fast ATI® MOBILITY™ RADEON® X700 graphics chipset with 128MB DDR memory for PC Games optimization. 1GB DDR memory and 160GB HDD, as well as a DVD-Super Multi double-layer drive and a 5-in-1 card reader all managed by the powerful AMD processor, guaranteeing top performance.

What's more, it has the following technology breakthroughs such as the **Acer SignalUp Technology** for stronger connectivity and improved wireless performance by 20-40%. **Acer eManager** that simplifies how to access contents and settings, and **Acer GridVista** that organizes your work in multi-windows format.

The new Ferrari 4000 offers easy connection solutions through the following features: integrated Bluetooth technology, Fourier IEEE 1394 interface, 4 ultra-fast USB 2.0 ports, WiFi enabled/Acer 1-xWeb card slot, built-in 10/100/1000 Gigabit LAN and Modem models and a wireless Bluetooth Optical Mouse.

"After almost two years of partnership and bringing to life successful and innovative notebooks such as the Ferrari 3200 and 3400, Acer has designed a truly exclusive notebook this time that exploited our firm intention to stay at the forefront of innovation. It's an ambition that has always characterized both the worlds of Formula One and Information Technology," says Gianfranco Lanci, president of Acer Inc.

Adds Jack Goh, general manager of Scuderia Ferrari, "Technology is essential to the achievement of our objectives. We believe that innovation leads to constant evolution, and we are delighted that one of our official supplier has placed such importance on the research and development of advanced technological solutions."

Ferrari 4000, a unique notebook in terms of design, material, color and performance, comes from rare companies, which, despite operating in completely different markets, are closely linked by their constant research to improve their products and maintain leadership.

The Ferrari 4000 will make its grand debut in the Philippines in event that aims to set a new standard of partnership between Asia Chill Nutrition, Inc. and Acer Philippines which will be held today July 19 at Speed Zone, Port Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.

For more information please log on to www.acer.com.ph or call the Acer Hotline at 815-3388.

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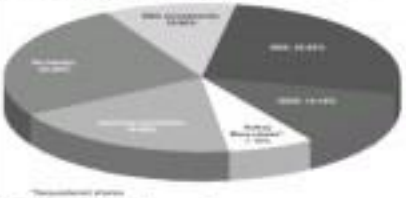

Go family's boardroom . . .

Previous page

the bank's majority shareholders have been hamstrung at shareholders' but at least maintaining some control over their affairs.

Pilapil, who is the chief executive vice president of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), believes the Go family's defense strategy hinges on Equitable PCI's corporate secretary, Atty. Nilo Divina.

"If (not all, he plays a big role in determining if stockholder's protest will be valid," Pilapil said. "He can determine if any shareholder can gather enough votes to nominate people to the board."

Equitable PCI may have to rely on this strategy to prevent the group of mall tycoon Henry Sy from gaining a foothold in the bank's board of directors.

Sy's holding firm owns only 1.8 percent of Equitable PCI shares. But it attempted during last year's annual stockholders' meeting to solicit enough proxies from other shareholders—4.67 percent is required by such suit—to nominate a representative in the bank's board.

They rose to the same battle at today's meeting, and Divina will again be crucial in protecting the entrenching Go regime.

"In addition, (Divina) has a strong say in the nomination committee which the Go family also controls," Pilapil said.

Thus, Divina is disqualify any board nominee whom he feels may act against the bank's—or the Go clan's—interests.

This was what happened last year when the SEC acted to nominate personalities allied with the Sy camp in a prelude to the role of the previous bank's holdings in the eventual merger.

Strategic ally

Prior if not for the corporate secretary, Equitable PCI would be seen to merge with Sy's Banco de Oro Universal Bank, critics claim. Divina did not return calls for the interview apart from a sparsely worded e-mail statement.

Pilapil believes that, with such a seemingly divided ally, the SMB and the board necessarily former will still have a tough battle with the Go dynasty—owing to a overwhelming majority interest of the Go's.

Pilapil also considers that Divina can only be removed by a decision from the board of directors—which the Go family dominates—or by the action of the Securities and Exchange Commission, if he is found to be acting against the interests of the stockholders.

"The SEC can remove it, but that will take time," Pilapil said.

And time is something both sides can use.

The 366,626 block, allied with the group of Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez, are hoping that the Makati Regional Trial Court will issue an order barring the Go family from voting in their favor 124 percent in bank shares held by Equitable PCI investment house subsidiary.

Regulators, like the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), believe that these shares should be disclosed properly among all shareholders since they were acquired using the bank's funds. Such operations—an opinion the Go family will likely refute.

The premiere bank also want the court to stop anyone from postponing today's stockholders' meeting, which they feel the Go family will resort to in order to remain firm hold on the bank.

But long such an order last the Go family will almost certainly leverage the contested block of shares to consolidate their grip on the board or may reply on a meeting postponement.

"That's what some are trying to prevent," Pilapil said.

Converging, diverging interests

The legal battle in the courts, however, may make—or break—or not be the most important issues in the bank's business history—the safety of P264 billion worth deposition' money and the control of P110 billion in assets.

According to the Institute for Corporate Directors (ICD), the core question is if the Go family is trying in the best interests of Equitable PCI stockholders, which includes the depositors.

If they are not, will depositors' hard-earned money be better off under a bank run by Henry Sy?

"It doesn't matter whether it's the minority or majority, what matters is the bank," said Ateneo's John Morrow, ICD executive director. "What's important is the interest of the corporation and its stakeholders."

The ICD, which promotes corporate governance especially in the upper echelons of opaque company boards, said determining the intentions of either camp will crystal which group is acting in the best interests of stakeholders.

"In the end, whose interests are they trying to protect?" Morrow asked.

Indeed, do the interests of the Go family jibe with the interests of the bank's stakeholders? It is not an easy question to answer.

While the Go clan guided the bank's fortunes ably since its founding 55 years ago, they have since doubled its stated assets, stood ruthlessly in the wake of the financial crisis that battered rivals and saw the bank lose an estimated P90 billion in deposits over matter of weeks.

Only the intervention by financial regulators via a P30-billion emergency loan allowed for stay afloat.

Meanwhile, Morrow also laments the conduct of board representatives and officials who were blindly accepting the motions of the majority, sometimes instead of acting in the firm's interests.

"One's duty [as a board member] is to the corporation and not to the nominating group," he said.

Legal vs ethical

Beyond the shareholder squabble, however, the case is now evolving into a question of legality versus ethics.

The Go family is intent on using both and not present reasons why to maintain its hold on the bank. Their opponents accuse them of using the bank's resources to shore up their wanting position.

"At the SEC it's not about ethics or the ethical is ethical," Morrow said. "Doing what is legally safe is the minimum. If you can beat practices, then that is ethical."

The ICD official said that, in the case of Equitable PCI and similar shareholder fights, "what is legal is not always reasonable with best practice."

He reminded that former Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima had instructed SEC and GSIS to approach the PCB for an opinion on the Equitable PCI case. Purisima resigned from the Cabinet before the BSP could duplicate to the case.

Naturally, the opposing camps look down the moral high ground, saying they are acting in the best interests of their stakeholders. Thereby clouding the issue in a more casual observer.

"In the end, the Go clan even gets the upper hand, legally speaking," said one banker familiar with Equitable PCI's troubles. "But if it take the 'ethical test,' they could know who's right and who's wrong. "To be continued]

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AEV, SN Power to jointly bid for Napocor hydro plants

By Abigail L. Hu

ABOITIZ Equity Ventures Inc. (AEV) and Ayala Corp.'s (AC) Power Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Pedlac) are expected to submit their respective bids for the sale of the National Power Corp.'s (Napocor) hydroelectric power plants on Wednesday, July 20, the deadline for the submission of bids.

Pedlac was also the first company to submit its bid for the Napocor assets. It was in March last year that the auction for the U.S. government (AFG) Telecoms Consolidators Inc. (Telecon) was held.

Napocor's hydroelectric power facilities that have been lined up for privatization include the 1,000-MW Pantabangan and the 12.6-MW Masiway in Nueva Ecija, the 75-MW Ambuklao and the 100-MW Binga on Benguet, the 105-MW Ipo Dam in Bulacan, the 60-MW Magat in Isabela and the 360-MW Angat in Bulacan.

AEV has interests in power generation, power distribution, banking, food and manufacturing operations.

SN Power is engaged in investing in, developing and operating hydropower projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The company's two founding partners, Statkraft and the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries (Norfund), give it the necessary technical and financial backbone to develop hydropower facilities in various countries.

According to AEV's disclosure, Statkraft is Europe's second largest hydropower producer, having stakes in more than 50 percent of plants in the area with a total capacity of 12,000 MW.

Breaktime

shares paid for with the P6.7 billion from Spirit, 686, after some time, declare "treasury shares," which the Co initially used to avoid a default.

The P6.5 billion worth of shares, paid for by Spirit of P686 each, somehow got ... sold, "retired."

That means the capital of the bank was reduced by P6.5 billion. It was as if the bank bought its own shares. That should have made the shares into "treasury shares."

Under banking rules, if the shares of the company are outstanding shares, and the company acquires them, they become treasury shares.

The rules also say that the "treasury shares" must be disposed of (i.e., sold) within six months. It was known everyone knew.

Why did the Senghis bankers not stop the bookkeeping? Why did the external auditors, the SGV outfit, back the management in the annual reports? Why was nobody sentenced?

* * *

MEGS you don't [illegible] Gen. just to pay for the [illegible] family in the company, and investors could have saved money for the bank.

It was best investor for the bank, and close for the GSIS and SSS, and then for millions of shareholders.

Because of the low interest of the bank, its price collapsed on the stock market, cutting the market value of our investments in half.

* * *

STILL, the Go family could not have done everything without their "attack dogs" on the board.

And we have an [illegible] "independent directors," namely former Foreign Affairs Secretary Roberto Romulo, former Ambassador Cesar Bautista, and former diplomat Antonio Basilio.

Also on the board is a foreigner named Tony Cooney, who actually works for Equitable Card Network, which is my personal reward to the bank, but which is run by the Go family like it is a family-owned business.

The Power of "Connections"

PGA Cars, Inc., the country's only authorized importer, distributor and service provider of Audi cars, invites all Audi car owners to register their vehicles and take advantage of the benefits of being connected.

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Congratulations to

Philex Mining Corporation

On its
50th Anniversary

Incorporated on July 19, 1955

Disclosures

SM Investments Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Sept. 7, 10 a.m., at the Wheelhouse Hall in Lahug, Cebu City. Stockholders of record as of Aug. 8 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

Ma'adeen Corp. said that in connection to its warrants, the last day of its exercise period is July 25. Some 900 million warrants will be delisted from the official registry of the exchange on July 29. Also, the company shall be elected as directors Washington Sycip, Marcos Tarciano, Joseph Shia, Jaime Bautista, Justo Tito S., Benigno Ilustre, Hans Sy and Manuel Lim.

* * *

Macondray Philippines Inc. yesterday repurchased 5,000 of its common shares from the open market at an average price of P2.10 per share.

Compiled by Cyril J. Bonalaan, PSE Research

LIFESTYLE

FRESH & FAST

Accept your body

WELL AND GOOD

Vince Rivera

DIDN'T you just hate it when a friend you haven't seen in a long time makes a negative comment about your body? You don't feel so good about seeing them, do you?

It's unfortunate but we, Filipinos, have this ugly and pathetic if incorrect habit of making all kinds of comments about other people's bodies. And it's not just people close to you who do it. Even your hairdresser or manicurist feel she has the right to say things about your body.

It's bad enough when other people are vocal about how you look. It is worse when you yourself make negative assessments about your body. That's right—you can be your worst enemy. No matter of or say awful things about one's own parts of one's own body. This can be just as damaging to our self-esteem as when someone else does it.

You shouldn't allow other people to make hurtful comments about your physical appearance but neither should you let yourself do the same thing. We cannot always control what other people do but we absolutely have control over what we do.

Marriages can end up in separation and divorce but, for better or for worse, we are stuck with our bodies "till death do us part." It's the only one we will have in this life and that's why we should cherish, respect and love it. This means going to exercise, it also means accepting whatever "flaws" it has that you cannot change or that would require a drastic change in your lifestyle. If you want to be rid of them, that you couldn't live a normal life anymore.

Grin and bear it

There is nothing wrong with cosmetic surgery or dermatologic treatments and exercise programs to correct those flaws. But, let's face it, there are some things that you just cannot change, like your height, the width of your hip bones and your basic body type. So, at some point, you will have to accept and love your body the way it is. You just gradually lose cheerfully.

Here are some practical tips to start a love affair with your body, no matter what its shape is right now.

• Make a list of what you like about your body and what you don't like. Everyone's physical appearance has strengths and weaknesses. Your

SEE RIVERA, L2

KENN Pascual's Famous 9 group in front of the Athens Panathenaic Stadium

Olympian search for Kris' co-star

GULF Air's fabulous Sky Bird in first and business classes. The first class section also has qualified staff to serve passengers.

THE GALS at the Venezia Seafood Resto in Mykonos. Bea Fortunato, Nicoleta Bell and Donna Cona-Pita

NICOLETTE welcome. 18-year-old Danish beauty Alexandra and Evy

THE SUPER Gulf Air crew consisted of Jude Bautista, Imelda Tarub, Ma Nieda Molano, Alicia Rego, Geraza Madre, and our very own Rosalind de los Reyes, Brigitte Waring and Tes Bonoan

CINDERELLA gals Theresa and Mariella Santos

SEEING off the Famous 9 group was Gulf Air's hardworking manager Robert Hakam (center) at Gulf Air's Business Lounge Manila. Standing (from left) are Fuentes, Jun de Leon, Bea Fortunato, Gulf Asia regional cargo manager Hassan Abdul Rudha, Robert Manangkil and Ben Chan; (seated) met Architect Miguel Rubio, Lisa Ilarde C., Mike Manangkil, Kris Aquino, Nicoleta Bell and Donna Cona-Pita

IN SEARCH of a Greek Adonis, the country's mega fashion event magnate, Jo Elena Ilaw Quan, brought a glamorous group of Gemo Manille trend-setters to beautiful, historic Athens and to the playground of the modern gentlemen, the perennial party-tummy Greek island of Mykonos.

Multi-class photographer Jun de Leon photographed and filmed the dazzling, handsome, adorable, brilliant, sensuous-and-delicious men, Kris Aquino's billboard where she will no doubt slide with her new sultry image.

Making this dream package a reality for Bench, Rimmel and Revlon-loved, pro-voice other than the ex-boyfriend/ young prince of Phi, Mr. Clarence Emanuel, Kevin Pascual, who brought his famous 9 globe-trotting group, jetsetgeo.

From Manille, we boarded the Middle East-ern world-class airline that "wins our skies," and Gulf Air, whose Philippine acting manager, Robert A. Hakam, escorted us to our well-ready business class seats for the eight-hour direct flight to bustling Bahrain.

Once airborne, the fantastic crew of Gulf Air not only takes care of you, they pamper you with their excellent service and couch-manners! And would you believe? The airline even has a dry dock that makes sure only the best meals are served!

The meals were definitely the best, with Kris's main concern to choose from. Her cookie's well-done dinner to be served, but Kris Aquino changed her something comfortable, said our goodnight to all of us, and went straight to sleep. For Kris, sleep is an important as her work.

One-of-a-kind

We had a couple of hours stopover in Bahrain, where we stretched our legs and unwound in Gulf Air's ultra-luxurious Business Lounge. This is a one-of-a-kind lounge, making you wish you can stay. The design is simply world-class and the amenities mind-boggling, pulsating.

After a four-hour flight we landed at Athens International Airport. It was hectic going through Immigration with only three officers processing arrivals and planes coming in from all parts of the world. I have to think what it would be like in the peak of tourist season. Ignoring the immigration officers' advice, I think she was the daughter of Cory. When the coast on, he gave her a big flirtatious smile and stamped her passport. Before you could bat an eyelash, she was out before any of us.

After dropping off our luggage at our lab-lavished City Hotel on Constitution Square, which I never chose on his return trip earlier, we were off to tour the sights including the Temple of Zeus built by Hadrian. Originally it had 104 Corinthian marble columns but only 16 remain today. 15 standing under their architraves.

Then, was the Panathenaic Stadium that set 70,000 spectators. Built in 4th century BC, it was completely restored in time for the Olympic Games of 1896. Here one of our top to-demand models, Nicoleta Bell, was photographed by set historian Jun de Leon wearing a cool Kaftan and Hellenic outfit. Then we went to other well-known sports

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH
Maurice Arcache

Photos by ALEX SAN DIEGO using Gerlach Pony Shoes

racetrack and ruins of the city, ending up at the main gate to Acropolis, where the view of the whole city was absolutely breathtaking, palatogeo.

Gorgeous nook

Back at the hotel, we were mobbed at the lobby by four of body-beautiful models with the most gorgeous faces from every corner of the globe, used by different modelling agencies for interviews and by Bea Elena, Revlon Beauty Use placed an ad to different towns papers seeking models for interviews when he was in Athens (two females wanted), ambient Miguel Prieto, and Kris Aquino, natch!), after had a big try on who she wanted as ambassadors for the latest wow Bench billboard and poster ads that would be out sooner than soon.

It wasn't easy making a choice from so many drop-dead gorgeous models but, in the end, the chosen ones were Kris, with 27-year-young Slovakian, a 23-year-young good-looking Serbian named Mina, and the stunningly beautiful 16-year-young Alexandrina from Denmark.

That evening, Bea treated us to dinner at the swinging, super fun area of the city, the Plaka, where the narrow streets had preserved their historic with its exquisite taverns, loads of restaurants, clubs and bars, where Mykonos and tourists alike had a blast all night long.

White mushrooms

Next morning at 8, the group was off to the port of Piraeus, connected to Athens by miles of suburbia with houses rising up like white mushrooms. The harbor was bustling with ships and boats and ferries. Yachts filled the Royal Yacht Club at the lower side of the harbor.

We took the one-hour hydrofoil ride to the fabulous to "to" island of Mykonos, where Kris and the chosen models were to shoot for a whole day for Bench, together with Nicolette and dimensions who did eye-catching bikini-y photo shoots for Bench's new Hot Bench with Mega's talented Lara with an "L" finely styling the gals.

Photo session started at 7 a.m. right at our beautiful, quaint family Hotel, with a cool pool and a fantastic view all the way to the emerald blue Mediterranean sea.

And guess who was in Cory? None other than Cinderella's own, Cinderella gals, Theresa Santos Cornwell and her daughter, vivacious Mariella, who joined us from Milan where Mariella checked out that fashionable city a day before we arrived. The following day, another wedding fete to the Goddess's to go to attend a grand bash of Estrella Lindo, who was celebrating with us not long ago.

DINNER at 7 p.m. at the famous resto Venezia and he was on call up

A FLIGHT attendant of Gulf Air trained as Sky Nanny

PHILIPPINE Star's stylish editor Miko Manangkil and her husband, businessman Robert M., with Famous man Kenn Pascual

HERBIVOR girl Kris Aquino and Bench star Ben Chan by the view of the Acropolis

NICOLETTE in Barbie's swimwear wear, also at the Acropolis

DOING the go-kaki scene of the Theresa in the Plaka Section of Athens

THE GANG wales at the harbor of Mykonos for our leg-ended ride back to Athens.

Hidden laws of nature

WHY is it that when I think of something I want, it comes to me," asks a reader. Another asks why some people are born blind, others talented and still others very sickly.

All these illustrate the workings of hidden Cosmic Laws or laws of nature that govern our lives subtlety so we are aware of them or not, whether we believe in or not. Since these laws are hidden or esoteric, they cannot be analyzed in laboratories and do not fall within the purview of orthodox science. But they are real.

These hidden laws of nature or Cosmic Laws may be termed as follows: Law of Suggestion or Affirmation, Law of Attraction, Law of Causality and the Law of Compensation.

Let me explain each of them.

Law of Suggestion/Affirmation

This may be expressed that: "What you suggest or affirm in your mind becomes a reality." This is what governs the process of materialization—making things appear out of nowhere.

The law is based on the principle that when becomes physical reality must first be thought of. The great psychic Edgar Cayce says, "Mind is the builder, the physical is the result."

Stated another way, nothing exists in the physical universe that was not first in the mind of someone. The physical is in the realm of effects, while the mind and the spirit are in the realm of causes.

We example, before a table or chair becomes what it is, it must first exist in the mind of the carpenter. A sculpture must first exist in the mind of the sculptor. Before the sun, the trees and the birds appear, they must first appear in the mind of God.

By the same reasoning, before a person becomes rich physically, he is already rich mentally and spiritually. When we suggest, affirm or visualize something, it becomes a physical reality in the future.

Law of Attraction

This law states: "Like attracts like on the mental and spiritual plane." This is quite the opposite of what happens on the physical plane. The law of magnetism says, "Like polar repel; unlike poles attract."

The law of attraction gives rise to the saying: "Birds of the same feather flock together." You attract what you are. If you are loving and kind, you will be surrounded by loving and kind people; if you are highly negative and hostile, you will be surrounded by people with similar traits.

So don't blame the people around you. Watch yourself and your thoughts and you will surely notice an unmistakable pattern.

Law of Compensation

This law is more popularly known as Karma. It states that, "Everything you do will come back to you in full measure, nothing less and nothing more."

Sometimes known as the Universal Law of Justice, Karma is likened as in the Bible: "What you sow, you reap."

Karma explains why some people are born sickly, others healthy, why some are rich, others are poor. A person born poor may have amassed his wealth in a past life, so in this life he will have to lower hegality and the wine sin of misery.

Karma comes from the Sanskrit word that means "action." One can incur karma not only by physical action, but also through thoughts. Even if we only think of hurting or killing somebody without actually doing it, we have already incurred a karmic debt. That is how strict karmic law is.

You may escape human laws for doing something evil, but you cannot escape the karmic law. You have to face it or pay for it in the next life. You will surely meet the person again the person you owe a karmic debt to and you have to make amends for what you have done to him/her. That is why the law of karma is called the great "leveler." It makes all things equal.

Law of Causality

This law states: "Everything has a cause, nothing happens by chance."

There are no coincidences. Everything that happens is governed by some causal current law or principle.

Carl Jung, the great Swiss psychologist, was so intrigued by coincidences that he studied them in depth, calling them "synchronicity" he defined synchronicity as "the simultaneous and meaningful occurrence of two unrelated events."

Coincidences, according to Jung, might only be the end result of a long series of causally related events. As we only see the tail end, we do not realize at once the connection. The law of causality governs in seemingly random or accidental events.

Once we have raised or developed our sense of awareness, we will become conscious of and understand fully the hidden laws of nature. Until then, they will remain mysterious to us.

Address letters to this column to 19 Yen Place C 206 Arguelles St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Call 810-7241 or 0920-9000 for information on seminars I conduct. E-mail jdlacaste@i-cis.com or lovemeantime_2003@yahoo.com, or visit http://www.finance.about.com. Listen to my dzRH radio program, 7:30-8:30 p.m. every Sunday.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Standing airplane

THIS exercise strengthens and firms up hips and thighs, challenges core stability and improves balance.

Equipment:
None

Exercise technique:

1. Stand with your legs slightly apart and your arms extended out at shoulder level.

2. Take one foot behind on the floor then slowly lean forward from the hip. Lift your leg behind you and keep your supporting knee slightly bent. This is your starting position.

3. Carefully reach down with one, reverse to the start ing position, then reach with your other arm just like an airplane dipping its wings from side to side.

4. Do the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. This is an advanced exercise. Beginners one must be just holding their arms steady to develop balance and strength in the legs.

2. Be aware of keeping the knee joint ready to avoid having the knee pushing too far inwards or outwards.

3. Keep your abdominal muscles lightly held in to stabilize your trunk.

Repetitions:
Do five to 10 repetitions per leg.

Accept your body

Turn to page C2

some might tend to let he her you have into this logo.

- Be realistic about what you don't like. Is it because you have not taken care of your body? You might be complaining about having soft abs but you don't do any abdominal exercises to firm up your mid-section. If this is the case, then take action.

- Do you dislike your body because you are comparing yourself to someone you admire but who has a totally different type and shape? That is not a fair comparison and can only lead to frustration and an unhealthy body image. If you feel you need a role model, choose someone with a similar body structure.

- Take a reality check and look at the people around you. Healthy that very few people have "perfect" bodies. Don't be so hard on yourself.

- Be aware that the models and celebrities you see in fashion and lifestyle magazines look the way they do because they have the advantage of fashion stylists, makeup artists, hairdressers, professional lighting and, sometimes, celebrity body-sculpting artists who can do magic with computer editing.

- Learn to use clothes properly to enhance your body's strengths and hide your body's weaknesses. You may not look good in shirts but you look smashing in pants. A book that can help you discover the best way to dress for your body shape is "What not to Wear" by Trinny Woodall and Susannah Constantine. It offers excellent advice for even the most problematic figure types.

Body acceptance

To love your body, you must be comfortable with your appearance. In Prevention magazine, Dr. Ilene Ramirez, staff psychologist at a "fat-parent weight and health management center, suggests a body image exercise to encourage body acceptance.

Ramirez says to accentuate yourself slowly to your image by spending a few seconds a day looking at yourself with clothes on in the mirror. As the days pass, wear less clothes, until you are looking at your body completely naked for a few minutes at a time.

Ramirez says many people cringe when they have to look at their bodies, developing unrealistic ideas of how they really look. By facing your fears, you conquer them.

This exercise helps you to love your body in a healthy way—celebrate your good points, resolve or change whatever bad points you notice, your power to change and positively accept those which you cannot change.

This www.thebeautyclinic.info.